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Journal Philosophy

The European Journal of Homelessness provides a critical analysis of policy and practice on homelessness in Europe for policy makers, practitioners, researchers and academics. The aim is to stimulate debate on homelessness and housing exclusion at the European level and to facilitate the development of a stronger evidential base for policy development and innovation. The journal seeks to give international exposure to significant national, regional and local developments and to provide a forum for comparative analysis of policy and practice in preventing and tackling homelessness in Europe. The journal will also assess the lessons for Europe, which can be derived from policy, practice and research from elsewhere.

Contributors

Olof Bäckman
Swedish Institute for Social Research
Stockholm, Sweden
Olof.Backman@sofi.su.se

Jennie Bibbings
Shelter Cymru Swansea, UK
JennieB@sheltercymru.org.uk

Joanne Bretherton
Centre for Housing Policy
University of York, UK
joanne.bretherton@york.ac.uk

Thomas Byrne
Boston University, USA
tbyrne@bu.edu

Susanne Gerull
Alice Salomon Hochschule, Berlin
Germany
mail@susannegerull.de

Paula Goering
Toronto, Canada

Guy Johnson
Centre for Applied Social Research, RMIT University
Melbourne, Australia
guy.johnson@rmit.edu.au

Kristine Juul
Institute for People and Technology
University of Roskilde, Denmark
kristine@ruc.dk

Nikos Kourachanis
Panteion University
Athens, Greece
n.kourachanis@gmail.com

Cecilia von Otter
Swedish Institute for Social Research
Stockholm, Sweden
Cecilia.vonOtter@sofi.su.se

Peter K. Mackie
School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University
Cardiff, UK
MackieP@cardiff.ac.uk

Joy MacKeith
Triangle, Hove, UK
joy@triangleconsulting.co.uk

Eric Macnaughton
Wilfrid Laurier University, Vancouver BC
Canada
emacnaug@telus.net

Geoffrey Nelson
Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo ON
Canada
gnelson@wlu.ca

Frida Petersson
Department of Social Work
University of Gothenburg, Sweden
frida.petersson@socwork.gu.se

Nicholas Pleace
Centre for Housing Policy, The University of York
York, UK
nicholas.pleace@york.ac.uk

Myra Piat
Douglas Mental Health University Institute, McGill University, QC
Canada
Myra.Piat@douglas.mcgill.ca

Sten-Åke Stenberg
Swedish Institute for Social Research
Stockholm, Sweden
Sten-Ake.Stenberg@sofi.su.se

Ian Thomas
Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD),
Cardiff University, UK
ThomasIR2@cardiff.ac.uk

Carin Qvarfordt Eisenstein
Swedish Institute for Social Research
Stockholm, Sweden
carin.eisenstein@sofi.su.se

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Editorial

In promulgating policy change, it is held as self-evident, that policy responses to pressing concerns such as homelessness, should be based on evidence that clearly demonstrate that the policy adopted is shown to going to have desired effect. For researchers and advocates pressing for the advancement of policy instruments that can reduce homelessness, it is a constant source of frustration that many of the policies are simply not based on evidence, but often seem to fly in the face of the research evidence. In their paper on the introduction and embedding of Housing First in Canada, Macnaughton and colleagues provide important lessons for those wishing to advance evidence based policy on homelessness. In particular, they explore how we can move beyond piloting interventions that prove to be successful in ending homelessness to having them at the core of our response to homelessness. Exploring the case of the Housing First/Chez Soi randomised control trial in Canada, they affirm that in the first instance the research must be methodologically rigorous, but that this is not the only factor that determines whether evidence about what works moves into policy and practice more widely. Just as important is that the evidence should be framed as a 'plausible policy idea for solving a salient problem', and that a sufficient number of key policy actors are able to mobilise around and support such policy change.

In the paper by Kourachanis, the introduction of a pioneering housing led approach to ending homelessness in Greece, the Housing and Reintegration programme, is explored. The introduction of the programme is viewed as a welcome development, but it is a pilot project and a short-term intervention. The lessons from the Canadian experience above will no doubt be useful in developing strategies to mainstream the programme.

Policy change is also the theme of the paper by Mackie and colleagues who explore the pioneering policy shift in Wales to prioritising preventing homelessness over responding to homelessness after it has occurred. The prevention of homelessness, much like evidence based policy, seems obvious, but is not always the case in policy and practice. A key policy lesson from the Welsh experience is that legislation alone, while of course is vitally important, is insufficient. The implementation of the preventative turn in homelessness policy in Wales is uneven and inconsistent, demonstrating that the monitoring of policy change is as important as policy innovation. The theme of prevention also occurs in the paper by von Otter and colleagues on evictions in Sweden. Analysing a new database with detailed information on

evictions and threats of evictions and linking this information with other administrative databases, they are able to profile those households most likely to be served with eviction notices. These households tend to be the most socially and economically marginalised and the single most important reason for initiating eviction proceedings were rent arrears.

Two of the papers in this edition explore the experience of homelessness for women and for migrants. Both papers highlight important methodological issues in measuring and understanding homelessness, and the experience of homelessness for women and migrants is not well-capturing in much of the existing research on homelessness. In a 'state of the art' paper on gender and homelessness, Bretherton challenges several settled assumptions about women and homelessness. In particular, she argues that research which focuses on street homelessness and those using homelessness services, tends to miss a whole swathe of women's experiences of homelessness, such as use of gender based violence services and hidden homelessness. For Bretherton, a key task for future research is to understand how women navigate through homelessness, as such detailed data may hold the key to comprehending the differences in women's homelessness and the true nature and extent of women's homelessness. In her paper, Juul provides an example of research that explores how West-African migrants in Copenhagen 'navigate' through homelessness. In this rich ethnographic account of their strategies of survival, Juul details how what she terms these 'modern hunter-gatherers' navigate through a hostile urban landscape. In doing so, the paper provides a nuanced account of how migrants utilise services and offers one possible methodology for advancing the challenge set by Bretherton of how to understand different routes into and through homelessness. One of the reasons for the relative invisibility of women's homelessness and migrant homelessness is how homelessness is represented. Petersson, in her study of the representation of homelessness in policy documents in Copenhagen, Glasgow and Gothenburg, notes how the default category of "the homeless" tends to be constituted as specifically gendered (male) and racialised/raced (white).

The edition of the EJH also contains a robust, but respectful, exchange of views on the Homelessness Outcome Star between Joy MacKeith and the authors of a critical analysis of the Homelessness Outcome Star in EJH 11, Nicolas Place and Guy Johnson. The editorial committee of the EJH welcome and encourage such exchanges to foster critical discussion on both policy and practice interventions.

Articles

Part A

Reconsidering Gender in Homelessness

Joanne Bretherton

Centre for Housing Policy, University of York, UK

Abstract_ *Although research has been sporadic, the available evidence indicates that gender is consistently associated with differentiated trajectories through homelessness in Europe. Women's pathways through homelessness have been linked to domestic violence, women being 'protected' by welfare systems when dependent children are living with them and an apparently greater tendency for women to use and exhaust informal support, rather than homelessness or welfare services. This evidence is frequently disregarded in current European homelessness research, which often uses conceptualisations, definitions and methodologies developed when homelessness was seen predominantly as a social problem among lone adult men. The sites at which homelessness is studied and the ways in which data are collected, limit accuracy of measurement and inhibit understanding, but, this paper contends, the real issues centre on how mainstream definitions of homelessness exclude women. Women, who lack any security of tenure, physical safety, privacy and whose living conditions are otherwise unacceptable – who are homeless – are too often outside the scope of contemporary European homelessness research. Drawing on recent UK studies and the wider European literature, this paper argues that there is a need to cease a longstanding focus on the streets, homelessness services and (predominantly) male experience and to look instead at the more nuanced interrelationships between gender and agency to fully understand the nature of homelessness in Europe.*

Keywords_ *Gender, homeless women, hidden homelessness, agency*

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Women's Homelessness: Invisibly Different

Women's disadvantage in European housing markets, reflecting women's greater experience of relative and absolute economic marginalisation, was first highlighted by social researchers decades ago (Watson with Austerberry, 1986). Women continue to experience some forms of housing exclusion at a higher rate than men across much of Europe (Domergue *et al.*, 2015).

Research has reported European welfare systems conditionally ending or preventing women's homelessness when they have dependent children with them, but often being less supportive in other circumstances (Doherty, 2001; Löfstrand and Thörn, 2004; Baptista, 2010). Culturally driven and often inherently sexist responses to women experiencing homelessness are also reported, particularly when a woman is not living in the 'expected' role of mother, wife or carer, within homelessness services as well as health and welfare systems (Bretherton *et al.*, 2016; Hansen Löfstrand and Quilgars, 2016).

Visibility is also linked to how welfare systems respond to women's homelessness. The UK has statutory systems specifically focused on family homelessness, disproportionately supporting lone women parents and recording the support that is provided. In other European contexts, family homelessness may be less visible because mainstream welfare systems respond more effectively to it or do not record such families as 'homeless'. Family homelessness may also be less visible because there are few supports, beyond the informal help a woman can find for herself and her children (Bretherton *et al.*, 2016).

The distinct nature of family homelessness, as a highly gendered experience, disproportionately experienced by younger women who are lone parents, has been recorded both in Europe (Pleace *et al.*, 2008) and the USA (Shinn *et al.*, 2013). This research highlighted major differences between family and single homelessness. Family homelessness often involves lone women with dependent children and is closely linked to domestic violence and economic marginalisation. It is not often associated with the high rates of severe mental illness, drug use, contact with the criminal justice system and poor health, seen among single long-term and recurrently homeless men (Busch-Geertsema *et al.,* 2010).

Women have also been found sleeping rough and within lone adult homeless populations across Europe, seemingly less numerous than men, but nevertheless clearly present. Inaccuracies in enumeration, particularly street counts which include only visible rough sleepers, when there are obvious reasons for women to hide themselves, may partially explain this pattern (Busch-Geertsema *et al.*, 2014, Johnson

et al., 2017). The point, however, is that there are, quite evidently, women among the people experiencing what is still seen, and often still recorded, as the largely male experience of single adult homelessness.

Finally, there is the evidence that women appear to often *choose* to take specific trajectories through homelessness, particularly in relying on informal supports to keep themselves accommodated (Jones, 1999; Mayock and Sheridan, 2012). Women appear more likely to rely on relatives, friends and acquaintances to keep themselves accommodated when they become homeless, only approaching homelessness and other services when or if these supports are exhausted (Shinn, 1997; Reeve *et al.*, 2007; Pleace *et al.*, 2008; Mayock and Sheridan, 2012). Women's homelessness appears to be different to that experienced by men because there is evidence that women often do not react to homelessness in the same way as men.

Reviewing the evidence on women's homelessness in Europe, it becomes apparent that data showing, or at least suggesting, the *inherently* gendered nature of homelessness, are routinely ignored in European research (Mayock and Bretherton, 2016). Homelessness is still often defined by European researchers in terms of people living rough and in emergency accommodation. While researchers tend to report that women are present in these homeless populations, it will often be in relatively low numbers and when a female presence is detected it often is merely noted, rather than thoroughly investigated (Pleace, 2016).

Typologising Women's Homelessness

Women's homelessness falls outside the focus of much European homelessness research because of how homelessness is defined. Women who lose their homes due to male violence and who have to use refuges and other services are often defined – and researched – as women who are 'victims of domestic violence' not as *homeless* women (Baptista, 2010; Jones *et al.*, 2010; Quilgars and Pleace, 2010). European research has shown that in Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden, women made homeless by domestic violence who are being accommodated in refuges or similar services, are *not* counted as homeless. If a woman, made homeless by domestic violence, were in an emergency shelter, living on the street or in temporary supported housing for homeless people, in any of these countries, she *would* be recorded as homeless (Busch-Geertsema *et al.*, 2014). In the UK, women made homeless by domestic violence are recorded as homeless if they receive the main or full duty (re-housing) under the four different sets of homelessness legislation.

However, women are not necessarily recorded as homeless if they head straight to a refuge because they have been made homeless by domestic violence and do not seek assistance under the statutory systems (Quilgars and Pleace, 2010).

Feminist analyses are characterised by discussions on the social construction of homelessness and the role of patriarchy and misogyny within the definition of homelessness. Such analysis is framed in terms of how a society and welfare systems within a society responds to women, particularly the social and cultural construction of women's roles. Women's homelessness is therefore viewed as a function of how women, in general, are responded to by the societies in which they live. Women's homelessness can then be seen and defined as being a social problem generated via these wider, structural and cultural, patriarchal forces (Watson, 2000).

For Neale (1997), feminist discussions of homelessness have added something to the discussion on the nature of homelessness, because patriarchy has shaped the contexts in which women's homelessness has occurred. Yet, as she argues, these feminist interpretations can reduce women to 'passive victims constrained to the private sphere of the home' (Neale, 1997, p.51). There is evidence that, even in what are regarded as some of the most advanced welfare and homelessness systems in Europe, sexist and culturally influenced responses to women's homelessness exist (Löfstrand and Thörn, 2004; Bretherton *et al.*, 2016; Hansen Löfstrand and Quilgars, 2016). However, for Neale (1997), experiencing homelessness within biased systems, while disadvantageous, does not mean that women lack agency, the capacity to influence their trajectory through homelessness.

Two variables are working in combination to influence how women's experience of homelessness in Europe is viewed. The first is the tendency to focus on largely male experience in research that is focused on male domains of homelessness, the street and emergency shelters. The forms of homelessness that women, on some evidence at least, appear more likely to experience, the hidden homelessness of living as a concealed household with friends, relatives or acquaintances, receive less attention from researchers, partially because only some European countries recognise hidden homelessness and partially because hidden homeless populations are harder to find and to research (Pleace and Bretherton, 2013). The second is both conceptual and administrative. Homeless women in refuges are often not regarded as homeless, but as 'victims' of domestic violence. Similarly, lone women parents with dependent children are visible when specific support systems exist and record their activities, but are not necessarily visible in other contexts.

The Differences in Women's Homelessness

Criticisms of the idea that women's experience of homelessness is distinct from that of men rest on the argument that the analysis of gender in homelessness is incomplete. When gender is used to explain differential experience of homelessness, critics usually argue that other variables, that would 'explain away' any apparent associations between patterns in homelessness and gender, are missing from the analysis.

For example, one criticism is that apparent 'gender' associations fail to take sufficient account of lifetime experience of poverty, poor educational attainment and other variables. This leads to an over-emphasis of the fact that someone is female, while de-emphasising the poverty, marginalisation and stigmatisation, shared with men, that are 'better' explanatory variables (Drake, 1987). Here, the argument is that class, rather than gender, 'explains' homelessness. It may be that the major trigger for homelessness is poverty and exclusion, but it is also clear that women do not experience homelessness in the same way as men. The triggers for women's homelessness are often different and their trajectories while homeless are often different, women's experience of homelessness is *different*. Gender plays a role.

Evidence of support and treatment needs can also be used to criticise the use of gender as an explanatory variable, arguing for example that single homeless women have characteristics, such as poor mental and physical health, that are more 'important' than their gender in explaining their experiences of homelessness. When socially scientific robust research shows single homeless women in homelessness services, sharing characteristics with homeless men (see for example, Benjaminsen, 2016), the idea that gender is a less important explanatory variable than support needs, can seem like it is being reinforced.

However, there is a real need for caution here, as it is clearly the case that women living rough and in emergency accommodation are only one *aspect* of female homelessness. There are women experiencing sustained and recurrent hidden homelessness, some of whom have high support needs, who do not appear to have contact with services or live rough. Female experience of family homelessness is also much more strongly correlated with poverty than with the presence of any support needs. The presence of women who share characteristics with men among rough sleepers merely means that male and female rough sleepers share characteristics. This does not mean all homeless women experience homelessness in the same way, or for the same reasons as homeless men, as, again, it is clearly the case that women's experiences are often different.

Consequently, recent debates around gender and homelessness have been informed by discussions on intersectionality and the interaction of multiple identities and experiences of exclusion (Davis, 2008). As Mostowska and Sheridan (2016) argue, the use of intersectionality to attempt to understand women's homelessness, with its capacity to encompass the interaction between the differing categorizations that women find themselves in alongside the macro (structural) and micro (lived experience) analysis is a more appropriate methodological approach.

Women's response to homelessness

If homeless women are assumed to be, broadly, the same as homeless men, two questions arise. The first centres around the logic of that assumption, in the face of what appears to be a very considerable difference in the nature of homelessness causation among women, i.e. the scale of the role of domestic violence, both in the experience of single women and women with families (Jones, 1999; Reeve *et al.*, 2007; Baptista, 2010; Mayock and Sheridan, 2012). If women are experiencing homelessness due to domestic or gender based violence at much higher rates than men, the idea that their needs and their pathways through homelessness can really be *consistent* with those of men, does seem rather a large assumption to make.

The second question centres on where all the homeless women are, because if anything, women experience socioeconomic marginalisation, poverty and poor life chances at higher rates than men (Domergue *et al.*, 2015). The standard answer, that women are not present because welfare systems and domestic violence services prevent and reduce a substantial proportion of women's homelessness, is not satisfactory in the light of the, now considerable, evidence that women *avoid* services and use informal support to maintain themselves in situations of hidden homelessness (Baptista, 2010).

Patriarchy, welfare system operation and responses to domestic violence are explanations of the differentiated nature of women's homelessness that effectively remove agency from homeless women (Neale, 1997; Casey *et al.*, 2008; McNaughton-Nicolls, 2009). Following these arguments, women's experience of homelessness is lower, or at least takes a different form, largely because potentially homeless and homeless women are processed by welfare and homelessness systems in a different way from men. The evidence on women's homelessness is less extensive than the evidence on male homelessness in Europe, but it is nevertheless the case that multiple studies clearly show women influencing and also determining their own trajectories through homelessness (Mayock and Bretherton, 2016).

Homeless women are often not in homelessness services, not living rough, not using domestic violence services, nor, when they have dependent children with them, necessarily being supported by welfare systems; they are instead using

friends, family and acquaintances to keep a roof over their heads (Shinn, 1997; Jones, 1999; Reeve *et al.*, 2007; Baptista, 2010; Mayock and Sheridan, 2012). Structural responses seem likely to have a significant role in the causation and sustainment of women's homelessness, but it is important not to become overly focused on the observable differences between welfare and homelessness systems when there is clear evidence that agency can determine whether and how women experience homelessness.

The enumeration quandary

The question then arises as to what the true extent of the differences between female and male homelessness are. Women are, the available European and North American evidence shows, living in situations of hidden homelessness in which they lack any legal right to occupancy and may lack privacy or any separate living space. The problem, across much of Europe, is that hidden homelessness is difficult to count. There are several issues here, including the fluid, temporary and often precarious nature of arrangements made by women experiencing hidden homelessness, and the inherent difficulty in counting multiple households living in a single dwelling (Pleace and Bretherton, 2013).

In the relatively data-rich context of the UK, specifically the administrative area of Northern Ireland where the State is a major provider of social housing, the author explored the possibility of enumerating homelessness using ETHOS and ETHOS Light as a broad framework for data collection. The inherent challenge in enumeration centred on the need for administrative contact, i.e. the statutory and other homelessness systems, which are extensive, could only record women and women with dependent children, when or if, they made contact. The challenges in counting hidden homelessness were summarised by one service provider (Pleace and Bretherton, 2013, p.42):

> *They could be homeless for a long period of time and be bouncing from family to friend and only eventually come to the attention of the* [homelessness services] *when that breaks down, or they've exhausted all those options.* Service Provider.

Attempting to populate ETHOS and ETHOS Light for this research was challenging in respect of people living in insecure accommodation (8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 in ETHOS[1]). However, data on broader housing conditions were relatively rich, and it was possible to draw on survey data and statistical estimates to determine that, in 2013, approximately 11 057 households were living temporarily with family and friends,

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1 http://www.feantsa.org/en/toolkit/2005/04/01/ethos-typology-on-homelessness-and-housing-exclusion?bcParent=27

out of a total estimated homeless population of 25 445 experiencing homelessness. In other words, the best estimate was that 43% of the homeless population was experiencing *hidden* homelessness (Pleace and Bretherton, 2013).

Finland, which has been enumerating homelessness for decades through a combination of data collection and estimation, reported that the bulk of the homeless population was people experiencing hidden homelessness in 2014 (76%). This figure was recorded in the context of a sustained, strategic effort to reduce long-term homelessness among people with complex needs and extensive homelessness services and generous welfare and social housing systems. The Finnish homeless population, including hidden homelessness, was relatively small in 2014, at only 7 107 households, but Finland estimated that 23% of homeless people were lone women (ARA, 2015).

Where hidden homeless populations are counted, or estimated, within Europe, they tend to be recorded as a significant proportion of overall homelessness. Denmark has reported that 28% of all homelessness is people sharing temporarily with friends or family, and one region of Germany with relatively extensive homelessness statistics, North Rhine-Westphalia, has reported 37% of homeless people are in the same situation (Busch-Geertsema *et al.*, 2014).

The presence of hidden homelessness – in those areas of Europe where staying temporarily with family and friends in the absence of any alternative is seen as homelessness – is not direct evidence of women's homelessness. The Finnish data do indicate significant numbers of women, but that is one country among many and the patterns shown there may not be replicated elsewhere, especially as Finland has systemically pursued the reduction of homelessness. Nevertheless, the scale of hidden homelessness, when combined with the research about the nature of women's homelessness, raises at least the possibility that women's homelessness may involve considerable numbers. There are caveats, for example the evidence that young people of both genders often experience hidden homelessness (Quilgars *et al.*, 2011) and of course men are not exempt from trying to temporarily put a roof over their head by relying on friends or relatives.

Some research suggests that hidden homelessness may be a more 'practical' option for women than men, although this is difficult to quantify, and risks entering into the kinds of generalisations that Neale (1997) criticises in some feminist interpretations of homelessness. The idea here is that women are seen as non-threatening and are more likely to be perceived as victims in need of support due to cultural constructions of women as more 'vulnerable' than men. Also within this of course, is the possibility that sexual exploitation can be used to barter for somewhere to sleep. The risks of these ideas and images are raised by Löfstrand and Thörn (2004) who highlight

assumptions made by service providers in Sweden that women had exchanged sex for somewhere to stay and that their homelessness equated to moral debasement, regardless of the reality of a woman's situation or her experiences.

Differing pathways – the evidence

Research based on the still widely used definition of homelessness, lone adults sleeping rough and/or using homelessness services, provides another means by which to explore the extent to which homelessness pathways are differentiated by gender. European evaluations of homelessness services targeted on lone adults tend, as in some of the author's own work, to report a minority of women among largely male service users. In an analysis of an innovative London-based service, using a 'Time-Banking' model, wherein homeless people enter into a barter economy based on exchanging time, one hour of activity helping someone else produces a time credit that can be spent accessing a service, support or other activity for an hour, the author found 26% of a user group of 412 were female (Bretherton and Pleace, 2014). Women using this service, alongside being less numerous, were significantly less likely to report contact with the criminal justice system, but were otherwise not found to be consistently distinct from the men. They were not characterised by engaging with the service any differently than the men. As noted, other European analysis of single homeless adults using homelessness services can report similar patterns (Benjaminsen, 2016).

In the evaluation of a large programme of education, training and support services, designed to promote socioeconomic integration for single homeless people, the author was again able to look at gender. The Crisis Skylight programme engaged with 14 148 single homeless people, who shared information on their gender, in the UK, over the course of 2013-2015. Fieldwork took place in six sites, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Merseyside (Liverpool), Newcastle-upon-Tyne, London and Oxford (Bretherton and Pleace, 2016).

Both parallels and differences were found between women and men. While outnumbered by men, 32% of those using the Crisis Skylight programme were women. Women were, at first contact with services, significantly less likely to be sleeping rough (4% compared to 13% of men), but reported being in a state of hidden homelessness (16%) at only a slightly greater rate than men (14%). The programme was open to single people at imminent risk of homelessness, i.e. housed but at risk of losing that housing, which women were significantly more likely to report than men (42% of women, 29% of men) (Pleace and Bretherton, 2017).

The 4 500 women using the programme reported experiencing domestic violence at much higher rates than men (26% compared to 7%) and were, as found in earlier research, less likely to have had contact with the criminal justice system

(9%, compared to 26% of men). Women also reported a history of drug and alcohol use less often than men (20% compared to 30%), though were closer to men when it came to a history of mental health problems (36% compared to 32% of men). Women were, following contact with the programme, marginally less likely than men to secure a job (8% compared to 10%), entered further education at essentially the same rate (9%) and did the same with respect to volunteering (8%) (Pleace and Bretherton, 2017).

An in-depth longitudinal analysis of use of the programme, tracking 158 single homeless people who had actively engaged with services, involving up to four interviews with each person over three years, identified different trajectories through the programme. Some service users regained progress, homelessness having disrupted what had hitherto been a position of socioeconomic integration, others made progress for the first time, moving away from sustained marginalisation that had characterised their life until that point, some experienced a mix of progress and problems, while for others, little progress, in terms of socioeconomic integration, appeared to be possible (Bretherton and Pleace, 2016). Women represented 30% of the group whose progress through the programme was tracked over time. In this group the women were quite distinct from the men, 53% of the women had regained progress, i.e. had returned to a situation of relative socioeconomic integration that had existed prior to homelessness, compared to 37% of the men. The men were, by contrast, more likely to be moving towards socioeconomic integration for the first time (38%) compared to women (17%). A similar proportion of both genders had made less progress (Bretherton and Pleace, 2016; Pleace and Bretherton, 2017). Again, women had experienced domestic violence at a far higher rate than men, though not every respondent chose to answer questions on this subject.

This research was an examination of a homelessness service programme, it was not a representative survey of the single homeless population, not least because it was research on the use of an entirely voluntary education and training focused programme. Several trends, also suggested by some other European research, did however appear to be evident among the people using the programme. Women were significantly less likely to be literally homeless, and more likely to report being at risk of homelessness or in a situation of hidden homelessness. Compared to the men, women were less likely to be using drugs or alcohol, less likely to have had contact with the criminal justice system and much more likely to have experienced domestic violence. Among the subgroup whose experience of using the programme was tracked over a period of up to three years, there was a sense of women being more likely to be people whose relatively integrated socioeconomic position had been disrupted by homelessness, but who, given support, had been able to move back towards their former position. The men were, by contrast, more likely to have experienced sustained socioeconomic exclusion.

A French national survey reported that lifetime prevalence of homelessness was clearly associated with gender, with men markedly more likely to experience rough sleeping and emergency accommodation than women. This research was based around a working definition of homelessness that focused on people living rough and in emergency shelters. Analysis indicated isolation, beginning with a disrupted childhood, was predictive of these forms of homelessness, i.e. men who had become socially marginalised as children and stayed that way, were those who entered homelessness. This kind of isolation, or at least this type of homelessness, was something women seemed less likely to experience. Living without a family or partner was interpreted as introducing personal emotional vulnerability and financial insecurity. The greater tendency of men to be single for prolonged periods was, in itself, seen as a risk factor (Brousse, 2009). By contrast, research into women's homelessness has tended to highlight relationship breakdown, particularly violent relationship breakdown, as a causal factor and the creation and deployment of relationships as a key resource that women draw upon to counteract homelessness, using friends, acquaintances and family to keep a roof over their heads (Reeve *et al.*, 2007; Baptista, 2010; Mayock and Sheridan, 2012).

Belgian research focused on populations characterised by precarious housing, i.e. not actually homeless but at heightened risk of homelessness, found more single people than couples or families compared to the general population, but not the same overwhelmingly male group as reported in many studies of single homelessness. This research suggested that once the focus is moved away from the extremes of single adult homelessness, into an examination of those at risk of homelessness, hidden homelessness and the experience of housing exclusion, women start to become much more visible (Meert and Bourgeois, 2005).

It could be concluded therefore that there is evidence that suggests patterns of visible female homelessness, i.e. women captured by surveys and in service evaluations, may still be distinct from male experience (see also Mayock *et al.*, 2015). While some single homeless women do look similar to homeless men, in terms of their experiences and needs, others do not.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence is a leading cause of women's homelessness and is a widespread experience among homeless women (Pleace *et al.*, 2008; Mayock *et al.*, 2016). The interrelationships between domestic violence and women's homelessness exist at two broad levels. First, there is the differential causation, which can be linked to specific trajectories through homelessness, which will not be experienced in the same way and certainly not to the same extent by homeless men. Second, there is the interface between homeless women and domestic violence services; where present, domestic violence services may prevent and reduce

homelessness, but this option may not always be open to women. Equally, women going through some domestic violence services may not receive the same kinds of support as that offered by homelessness services, in terms of preventing homelessness and sustaining an exit from homelessness. Some domestic violence services, such as Sanctuary Schemes (see Jones *et al.,* 2010) are in many senses a preventative intervention designed both to remove a woman from risk and to prevent homelessness, but some refuges may be more focused on immediate safety and emotional support, rather than housing sustainment.

In a survey and analysis of 321 domestic violence services in England, 57% reported that they "frequently" turned away women and women with children seeking support, with a 93% occupancy rate being reported for 3 707 bed spaces in refuge services. The survey also reported that 27% of domestic violence services were operating a waiting list, this included the emergency services designed to provide a woman at risk of violence with a safe and secure environment. Women made homeless by domestic violence or the threat of violence, were, in the UK at least, approaching domestic violence services at a rate higher than those services could manage (Quilgars and Pleace, 2010). This research was conducted prior to the sustained cuts to domestic violence services that has followed the 'austerity' measures being introduced in the UK from 2010 onwards. British research conducted in 2005 reported 13% of family homelessness in England was directly caused by domestic violence, with 44% of women experiencing such violence and 14% having experienced sexual assault (Pleace *et al.*, 2008). Similar associations appear to be universally present in Europe, Australia and in North America (Baptista, 2010; Mayock *et al.*, 2016).

Many homeless women appear to experience something that most men do not, homelessness that is triggered by violent relationship breakdown, homelessness that begins with having to escape what is supposed to be the secure and safe environment of their own home. The damage that this violence can do, and the disruption to women's lives that can result from it, brings a dimension to women's homelessness that is unique. Counter arguments are sometimes made, i.e. that men also experience violence of this sort, which is of course true, but one cannot assert there is some sort of parity or comparability in experience between genders. Men do experience domestic violence and abuse, as a cause and contributing factor to homelessness, but at a fraction of the rates experienced by women (Mayock *et al.*, 2016).

The Similarities in Women's Homelessness

One danger in emphasising differences in pathways through homelessness associated with gender is the risk that women having very similar experiences to homeless men, particularly single homeless men, might receive less attention than they should. Looking at long-term homelessness, Bowpitt *et al.* (2011), drawing on qualitative research results, highlight what they view as evidence that certain assumptions about women's homelessness are flawed. In particular, they argue that the assumption that long-term homeless women are less likely to sleep rough than men is flawed. It is important to note that this research was with a specific population, specifically selected on the basis that they were long-term homeless, which as North American research (Piat *et al.*, 2014) and some European data (Jones and Pleace, 2010) indicate may only be a relatively small element of overall homelessness. Yet for Bowpitt *et al.* (2011), women in this specific situation of long-term homelessness shared many characteristics with long-term homeless men, to the extent that the similarities were viewed by these researchers as more important than the differences.

The author evaluated nine of the first Housing First services to be piloted in England in 2014/15, 27% of service users were women, their support needs paralleling those of male service users in every respect. Again, while women had distinct needs, the similarities with the men, in this specific population of homeless people with high and complex needs were notable (Bretherton and Pleace, 2015).

This reiterates the point that gender differences relate to definitions. Women's homelessness, in Finland, Germany or Northern Ireland, is more visible because the categorisations of homelessness, like ETHOS, include hidden homelessness. Use a narrower definition of homelessness as in France, Spain or Italy and women become less visible. Women become less prominent and less distinctive because, as in the French case, the homelessness taxonomy basically incorporates people living rough, in emergency shelters and in temporary accommodation. In these countries, women are apparently less numerous, but this is because hidden homelessness is not recognised, meaning that the distinctive nature of many women's homelessness pathways are not recorded, or indeed, researched (Busch-Geertsema *et al.*, 2014).

Here, the evidence that homelessness can, in contexts like Finland and Denmark, be reduced to what is effectively a functional zero, may be important. In these contexts, women can and do, experience hidden homelessness, but the rate at which they do so may be comparatively very low. In those European contexts where poverty and therefore homelessness itself is less common, women's homelessness may be both narrower and, in some respects – probably excepting associations with domestic violence – less distinctive from that of men. The prevalence of severe mental illness, drug and alcohol use, disrupted childhoods, criminality and other

shared characteristics *may* sometimes be more important than gender (Benjaminsen, 2016). In European countries without integrated homelessness strategies, or sufficient welfare, health and social housing services and where poverty is more widespread, experience of homelessness among women appears to extend well beyond being a part of populations living rough or in emergency accommodation, and to include hidden homelessness on what may be some scale (Reeve *et al.*, 2007; Baptista, 2010; Mayock and Sheridan, 2012).

One further point can be raised here, which is the possibility that the effect of the more commonly researched forms of homelessness, rough sleeping and living in homelessness services may not be even. The differences within genders may be greater than the differences between genders, but some research has raised the possibility that women may sometimes be even more harmed by these forms of homelessness than some men. Following an evaluation of the first pilot of a Housing First service in London in 2012/13, it became apparent to the author that the needs of women, in what was a small service, tended to exceed those of men. Their experiences had been more negative, more damaging and their requirements for treatment were higher and more complex than those of the men among the small group of service users (Pleace and Bretherton, 2013).

Conclusions

The evidence base on women's homelessness in Europe is less well developed than is the case for single homeless men. The deficiencies in European evidence are fourfold. First, what may be a key aspect of women's homelessness, the experience of hidden homelessness, has received only limited attention. Second, family homelessness is less extensively researched than single homelessness among men. Third, when women are found among single homeless people, their presence is more likely to be noted than examined in depth (Bretherton and Mayock, 2016). Fourth, the experience of domestic violence causing homelessness is not sufficiently recorded, recognised or analysed as being homelessness, instead being treated as a 'separate' social problem of domestic violence (Mayock *et al.,* 2016).

The limitations in evidence have to be seen in the context of the wider evidence base on European homelessness. Research is heavily skewed to the North West, particularly the UK, and tends to focus on people living rough and in homelessness services. Data on homelessness is improving; Spain, Italy, Portugal and Poland now collect quite extensive data, for example. However, the issue of using definitions or frames of reference that exclude various dimensions of female homelessness remains widespread (Busch-Geertsema *et al.*, 2010; Busch-Geertsema *et al.*, 2014).

A key gap in the evidence base centres on understanding the roles of women's agency and decisions, both in terms of their homelessness and in terms of the nature of European homelessness itself (Neale, 1997; McNaughton-Nicolls, 2009). Women's homelessness is influenced by welfare systems, culture, sexism, patriarchy, the nature of homelessness services and the economy and housing markets. All of these influence the contexts in which women experience homelessness, but how women react to homelessness remains a key determinant of their experience. There is too much evidence showing women not using services and employing their own resources, often in the form of existing and new relationships, as their initial, or sometimes their sole, response to homelessness (Bretherton and Mayock, 2016). A woman experiencing domestic violence who becomes homeless as a consequence may use homelessness services, may go to domestic violence services (and often not be recorded as homeless) or may rely largely, or solely on friends, relatives or acquaintances. Choices may sometimes be constrained, there may not be a service to go to, but that does not mean that it is still not possible to decide which of a limited choice of trajectories through homelessness to pursue.

The hypothesis advanced by this paper is that while European homelessness is gendered by a range of interacting factors, understanding the *decisions* of homeless women is central to understanding how gender differentiates the experience of homelessness. While economics, culture, sexism, and patterns of welfare, health and social housing system provision may all play a role, women are not, this paper contends, deprived of agency once they are at risk of homelessness (McNaughton-Nicolls, 2009). Understanding how women navigate through homelessness may be the key to comprehending the differences in women's homelessness and the true nature and extent of women's homelessness in Europe.

Decisions and actions are not the sole means to understand women's homelessness, but understanding and focusing on this subject is the first step in understanding the multiple trajectories that women can take through homelessness. Homelessness systems and homelessness research have missed women's homelessness, in large part because of definitions which created a narrow focus on only some aspects of homelessness. Whole dimensions of the social problem of homelessness, which are often those involving or disproportionately experienced by women, from family homelessness to the role of domestic violence in homelessness causation and the nature and extent of hidden homelessness are underresearched. The pathways that women take through homelessness need to be better understood (Clapham, 2003).

Clearly, better understanding must involve much more systematic attempts to understand hidden homelessness. Of particular interest are two questions. The first is the extent to which Shinn's (1997) hypothesis in relation to North America, that

homeless women and female headed lone parent families have a tendency to exhaust every source of informal help from friends and relatives before seeking services, holds true in European contexts. The second is the extent to which hidden homelessness is a perpetual or near perpetual state for some women (Mayock and Sheridan, 2012), because if there is a population experiencing hidden homelessness for years, even perhaps decades, without accessing formal support, it is clearly a cause for concern. Alongside this, understanding both the relative and absolute scale of hidden homelessness, while presenting challenges (Pleace and Bretherton, 2013), is important, not least to try to understand quite what the real dimensions of women's experience of homelessness may be.

Another dimension of women's homelessness highlighted by this paper is the true level of understanding of women's experience of the most widely recognised forms of single homelessness. Women's presence in these populations has been noted by researchers, but it has been argued here and elsewhere that there is a tendency to note that a minority of women are present, but not to pursue further analysis (Casey *et al.*, 2008; Bowpitt *et al.*, 2011). Some research indicates that at the extremes of homelessness, women and men may have many experiences and needs in common, but while there is this possibility, the evidence is not yet at a point where it can be safely assumed, for example, that the effects and experience of rough sleeping is not differentiated by gender.

Equally, there are specific dimensions of women's homelessness that it is important to better understand. Some research suggests migrant women may be at heightened risk of homelessness, facing specific issues alongside the challenges of trying to integrate, work and seek publicly funded support in European countries (Mayock *et al.*, 2012). There are also indications that trajectories through youth homelessness may be differentiated by gender, particularly when young people reach their late teens and early twenties and males start to outnumber females. These patterns have been interpreted as young women forming relationships more quickly than young men and also, perhaps rather crudely and possibly incorrectly, interpreted as young homeless women becoming pregnant and accessing welfare systems and exiting homelessness through that route (Quilgars *et al.*, 2008).

Some of the intersecting concerns and issues with European homelessness research, for example the need to redress the 'Northern' bias in evidence, apply specifically to women. A key question here is whether and to what extent women's homelessness, including their tendency to resort to, or choice to use, informal support from friends, family and acquaintances may relate to welfare systems, social housing and the nature of strategic responses to homelessness (Bretherton *et al.*, 2016).

The key concern, as the author and others have raised elsewhere (Mayock and Bretherton, 2016), is the relative neglect and, by extension, the untested nature of the assumptions about gender and homelessness in Europe. This gap in understanding about women's homelessness is a major gap in evidence about European homelessness, indeed homelessness in general. The failure to fully research gender and homelessness is a failure to fully research and seek to understand the nature of homelessness itself.

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Dynamics of Evictions: Results from a Swedish Database

Cecilia von Otter, Olof Bäckman, Sten-Åke Stenberg and Carin Qvarfordt Eisenstein

Swedish Institute for Social Research, Stockholm, Sweden

Abstract_ *Research has shown that about one quarter of people who are evicted in Europe may become homeless. However, our knowledge of the dynamics behind housing inclusion and exclusion is rather limited. This article includes results from a new database covering all judicial processes registered by the Swedish Enforcement Authority regarding evictions or threats of eviction which occurred in Sweden from 2009 to 2012. These data have, in turn, been linked to several administrative registers for the years 1990 to 2014. Our results show that an overwhelming majority of evictions are caused by rent arrears. Although only 6% of applications for summary proceedings end up with an executed eviction, it is likely that many threatened households move out before to avoid the eviction. Evictees are severely socially deprived. About 15% in the population do not have any labour market income, compared to more than half among the evicted, 14% in the population has a criminal conviction compared to 60% among the evictees, and 7% among the population received means tested social assistance compared to two thirds of the evicted.*

Key words_ *Evictions, longitudinal, homelessness, Sweden, database*

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Introduction

Evictions are concentrated among people with complex support needs and research has shown that about one quarter of those evicted may become homeless (Kenna *et al*., 2016). At the same time, facts and figures regarding housing marginalization processes are sparse. This has resulted in rather limited knowledge of the dynamics behind housing exclusion and inclusion. The lack is particularly acute when it comes to longitudinal studies focusing on the processes that precede and follow from evictions (e.g. job loss, marital dissolution, and homelessness). In this article, we put evictions in Sweden in a judicial and social context and present a database covering all judicial processes registered by the Swedish Enforcement Authority (Bailiff) that involved evictions or threats of eviction during 2009 to 2012. These data have been linked to several administrative registers, including information about household income, unemployment, illness, etc. during 1990 to 2014[1]. The information makes it possible to describe social and health processes that precede or follow a threat of eviction. Information concerning a control group consisting of a 10% representative sample of the Swedish adult (16+) population in 2012 is also included.

While Sweden was not hit particularly hard by the financial crisis of 2008, other developments in Swedish society in general and on the housing market in particular are of interest. Affordable housing is unavailable to many (especially the young and in urban regions), over-crowdedness is an increasing problem, and policies have in recent years encouraged the public rental sector to have a more business-like approach (Hedman, 2008). Distributional inequalities in health and income are on the rise. Unemployment has remained high since the employment crisis in the 1990s (Palme *et al.*, 2002) and several welfare state policy domains have witnessed continued erosion (Fritzell and Lundberg, 2007; Ferrarini *et al.*, 2012; Bäckman and Nelson, 2017). In 2015, Sweden also received almost 163 000 refugees that have to be housed during the coming years.

We begin this article with a brief discussion of evictions as a social phenomenon as well as the different forms and formal stages of the legal eviction process in Sweden. Thereafter, we describe the Swedish housing market and its dynamics within a broader framework of housing market organization. Based on the new database, the paper continues with an overview of characteristics of individuals and households threatened by eviction and actually evicted. Lastly, directions for further research within and beyond the current research project are discussed.

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1 With permission from the Stockholm Regional Research Ethics Committee (2014/24-31/5).

Evictions and severe housing problems in modern welfare states

Access to stable, safe and decent housing is a crucial factor in human well-being, health and sense of belonging (O'Mahony, 2006). An eviction, the loss of one's home, is one of the most severe sanctions one can be subjected to under civil law (Desmond, 2012; Stenberg and Kjellbom, 2013; Kenna *et al.*, 2016). Evictions are manifestations of conflicts between property owners and residents or between lenders and indebted home-owners. These conflicts concern two widely accepted rights – the civil right to private ownership and the social right to housing (Marshall, 1963; Stenberg *et al*., 2011). How these competing interests are balanced in the legal system varies across time and place. Two important factors are the relative power of landlords and tenants and the structure of the housing market (supply and demand, the relative proportions of owner-occupied, rental, social housing, etc.). Due to the dual character of housing problems as both social and judicial issues, both the social welfare offices and the judicial systems are usually involved in eviction processes. The judicial system is called in to deal with claims regarding breach of contract, and to guarantee the civil rights of landlords and tenants. The social welfare services are typically involved in tenants' basic need of housing.

Given the essential importance of a home, the proportionality of the sanction (eviction) in relation to the failure (breach of contract) can be disputed. Many evicted become homeless or resort to unsafe and substandard housing, and are thereby in practice denied access to social citizenship (Somerville, 1998). In cases of eviction, the widely-accepted norm that one should fulfil duties of payment and uphold the contractual obligations of a lease is probably the most important reason why this relatively severe sanction upholds its legitimacy in different political systems and across time.

Most modern welfare states accept the social costs of the eviction sanction by offering various inclusionary countermeasures to the victims of an eviction process. But the scope and content of these countermeasures often depend on the distinction between "deserving" and "undeserving". An interesting dilemma are children living with "irresponsible" parents where social welfare services often consider it necessary to pay the debt in order to save children from homelessness (Stenberg *et al*., 2010). People threatened by eviction are typically weak actors: many do not apply for assistance and are unable to enforce their rights by themselves[2].

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[2] Previous research has indicated that the legal possibility to appeal an eviction is probably underused. In a randomized experiment from the U.S., low-income tenants provided with legal counsel were much less likely to have an order of eviction against them and more likely to benefit from stipulations requiring rent abatement or repairs to their apartment, compared to pro se counterparts (Frankel *et al*., 2001). Another under-utilized measure is the possibility for the social welfare services to intervene towards the later stages of the eviction process, for example, by taking on the lease from tenants with rental arrears.

Laws and Legal Processes

An eviction of a tenant is in Sweden based on a decision made by the Bailiff in a summary proceeding, a decision by a regional rent tribunal, or a judgement from a district court. For indebted homeowners, the basis is a protocol of a judicial foreclosure of real estate. Few foreclosures end with evictions as most homeowners move before a public auction is enforced. Therefore, we will in the following only describe eviction processes involving tenants.

The most important steps in the eviction process, which are the same for private and public landlords, are 1) the notice to quit, 2) the court procedure, and 3) the actual enforcement. This process is similar in most countries, but varies substantially in duration across nations. The legal process in case of rent arrears is swift in Sweden compared to many other countries (Djankov *et al.,* 2003; Kenna *et al.,* 2016), but the legal protection of tenants' leases is comparatively strong (for details see Bååth, 2015, p.55).

All leases (with exemption of subletting) are unlimited in time. Landlords can only terminate a lease with valid cause, typically rent arrears or extreme anti-social behaviour. Tenants can prolong a contract indefinitely and have the right to terminate a lease at any time with three months' notice. A landlord can only refuse to prolong a lease if there is a valid cause, such as repairs or renovations requiring the property to be vacated. In this instance, the landlord is usually required to provide alternative accommodation. Also, if the landlord wants to sell the property, tenants' right to residency is retained and present tenants are thus "included in the bid". In other countries, for example in England, fixed-term contracts are rather common and landlords do not need a reason for terminating the contract (Kenna *et al.,* 2016).

Notice to quit and summary proceedings

The judicial procedure may follow one of two routes. The first and most common is the summary proceeding. If the tenant is more than one week late with the rental payment the tenant's right to tenure is forfeited and the landlord is entitled to terminate the lease. In this case, a notice to quit should be sent out one week after the rent is due. However, there is no obligation for the landlord to terminate a lease due to rent arrears. The landlord can postpone a termination for an unlimited period of time. In most cases the landlord reminds the tenant two weeks after the rent is due. If the rent is not paid when the following month's rent is due, a notice to quit is sent out (Konsumentverket, 2011). The possibility of giving a notice to quit as early as one week after the rent is due is the shortest period in Europe. For example, in Greece it is two weeks, in the UK privately rented sector one month and in social housing two months. In Germany it is two months (more than one month at two

payments), and in France three months (where housing benefit is paid to the landlord) (Kenna *et al*., 2016). After the tenant has been notified of the notice to quit a three week long "regaining period" commences during which the tenant can regain the right to tenure by paying the debt. If the tenant fails to pay the debt the right to tenure is forfeited. Many countries have similar arrangements, but the length of the regaining periods varies substantially. Denmark recently extended the period from three days to two weeks, and in Germany the period was some years ago extended from one to two months after the initiation of court proceedings (Kenna *et al.*, 2016).

When a notice to quit has been served the landlord is obliged to inform the municipal social welfare board. Similar obligations for landlords to inform housing/social and welfare/child protection agencies also exists in several other European countries (see Kenna *et al.,* 2016). This information may, however, have very different effects. In Sweden the social welfare board may during the "regaining period" notify the landlord in writing that it will assume responsibility for payment of the rent. This decision, based on a standard means test, will stop the process (SFS 1970: 994). In other European countries, the responses to the information varies substantially. For example, in Austria local authorities have no obligation to ensure preventive measures, in Belgium the authority is obliged to investigate how it can support the household, and in Denmark the social authorities must act on the information when there are children or people in need of support in the household. Similar obligations can be found in Estonia (Kenna *et al.,* 2016).

After the regaining period the Bailiff may provide a ruling according to summary proceeding regulations. The tenant may contest the summary proceeding at any stage from application to ruling. If so, the case is transferred to a district court.

Rent tribunals

The second type of judicial procedure is a proceeding in a rent tribunal. The landlord will then apply to terminate the lease. This is a much more time-consuming process as the landlord must wait three months between the notice to quit and the date the tenant must leave the dwelling. An advantage for the landlord is, however, that the tenant cannot regain tenancy by paying the rent during a three-week regaining period. This process is mostly practiced in cases of repeated delayed rent payments, illegal subletting, and tenants' antisocial behaviour. According to a recent amendment (July 1, 2014), the social welfare board must be informed in these cases as well.

The eviction

The third step in a typical eviction process is the actual enforcement of an eviction. If the tenant has not moved out in due time, an eviction may be enforced in three different ways. The most common is that the Bailiff changes the lock to the dwelling and removes the tenant's name from the door or entrance. The dwelling is then redefined as a place of storage. The landlord is now responsible for the evictee's belongings. The second strategy is to conduct a stepwise eviction. Also in this case, the lock is changed and the name removed, but two to seven days later the Bailiff returns to empty the dwelling. The third eviction method is perhaps what most people associate with an eviction, namely that the dwelling is emptied immediately and all belongings moved to a storage, for which the evictee must pay. The belongings are kept for three months during which the evictee can collect them. After three months they can be disposed of (except particularly valuable or personal items). The evictee may also empty the storage him- or herself during the three-month period.

The relatively landlord-friendly eviction process in Sweden does, however, include obligatory preventive measures. For example, the social services must be notified when a legal eviction process is started, and they are commissioned to work preventively against evictions. However, the social services do not have judicial means to stop evictions and are not in general obliged to help households with rental arrears, not even when the households include children (Stenberg and Kjellbom, 2013).

To receive assistance from the social services towards rental arrears, tenants must apply and be found eligible. Although many households are in fact eligible for support, few households facing eviction actually apply for housing allowances (Flyghed, 2000). Another possibility for these households is that the social services take over the rental contract, thereby preventing the eviction. This option is only rarely taken into effect by the social welfare services. Whether, and to what degree, the social services intervene in the eviction process (economically or otherwise) depends on an overall assessment of the tenant's needs, behaviour and actions, as well as future prospects.

Evictions or forced move-outs?

As mentioned, the most common judicial procedure in Sweden involves a decision by the Bailiff based on a summary proceeding which ends a tenant's right to residency. The decision can be used by the property owner (creditor) in an application for the enforcement of an eviction, i.e. the last step of the eviction process. If the executive department of the Bailiff finds that there are legal grounds for the eviction, the tenant is asked to leave the dwelling on a specific day.

About 6% of all applications for a summary proceeding are not executed (see Figure 1) and the fate of these people is basically unknown. One explanation is that many tenants manage to regain their leases. Another is that many tenants move without being formally evicted to avoid the stigma of an eviction which only reduces their chances of a new lease. Statistics on executed evictions thus tend to grossly underestimate forced move-outs. The eviction process resembles "a leaky funnel" where the number of applications for eviction is much higher than the number of executed evictions.

According to Kjellbom (2013), it is possible to distinguish between three types of forced move-outs. The distinction between the categories is based on the degree of threat or force used to make the tenant move. *Informally forced move-outs* include cases where the tenant accepts the landlord's termination of the lease. *Formally forced move-outs take* place when there is a legal decision requiring the tenant to move, to which the tenant obliges. In both situations the tenant can leave the dwelling during the process without opposing the decision and the legal grounds for the termination of the lease will never be tried. This pattern can be observed also in other European countries (Kenna *et al*., 2016). For instance, in Finland every year between 2010 and 2013 more than 2 000 households had left their homes before the Bailiff could execute an eviction (Kenna *et al*., 2016). There is no knowledge about how many people are affected, where they move, who they are or what impact it has on homeless rates. The last category consists of *executed evictions*. This may not necessarily be by force. It is the Bailiff's duty at this point to ensure that the tenant leaves the dwelling.

Housing Market Marginalization Dynamics

It can be hypothesized that levels and patterns of housing exclusion are influenced by how the housing market is organized and how the housing stock is structured (Ball and Harloe, 1992; Kemeny, 1995). The balance between for-profit and non-profit principles and available forms of tenure produce different entry and exit dynamics as well as varying selection of residents into tenure types.

The Swedish housing market has been characterized as an *integrated rental system,* where non-profit rental sector actors (state, local actors) compete on the same terms as the for-profit rental sector. Integrated rental systems tend to have comparatively large proportions of rented dwellings, a more positively selected group of home-

owners and a broader population of tenants[3]. On a societal level, they also reduce housing costs for low-income groups and the prevalence of housing deprivation (Borg, 2015; DeWilde, 2015). Private landlords have been forced to adjust rent levels to match those of the non-profit sector, leading to below-market rents in the system as a whole (Kemeny, 1995). The Swedish housing market has in recent years become more market-oriented. In 2011, the Public Housing Companies Act was replaced by the Public Municipal Housing Companies Act. The implication was that public housing companies were to operate according to business-like principles. Rents are set in local negotiations between landlords and tenant organizations, and private landlords do not need to adjust their rents according to public housing rents. The negotiations are still strongly connected to the utility value (bruksvärde) of the dwelling, and disagreements may be settled by a Rent Tribunal.

Keeping the public rental sector in the same market as the private can be a market interference that changes the competition; low-income tenants compete for acceptable standard housing on the same market as everyone else but are "given better odds". This differs from the means-tested, selective principles associated with so-called social housing. However, when housing in general and affordable housing in particular is under-supplied, the pressure on low-income tenants and prospective tenants may be quite harsh in integrated rental systems. When housing demand is strong, landlords are likely to give less leeway to tenants with rent arrears, lower incomes (i.e. lower security) making housing market entry difficult for newcomers as well as re-enterers.

The present Swedish housing market is characterized by an acute housing shortage, low mobility and a suboptimal use of dwellings (Boverket, 2014). This development can be largely explained by rising incomes among high and middle income earners, low mortgage costs and population growth. Consequently, vulnerable groups have slim chances of acquiring a rental lease or buying property for that matter, especially in the urban regions. As a result, there are few "evictionable" persons in the system. A lease is a prerequisite for a formal eviction and, hence, homeless people cannot be evicted. This is reflected in Sweden's low eviction rate and relatively high rate of homelessness (Socialstyrelsen, 2012; Kronofogden, 2015). A similar observation has been made in research on evictions based on European sample data

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3 According to this typology another prevalent rental system in affluent societies is a dualist rental system (Kemeny, 1995). It has a tightly controlled state-regulated rental sector targeted at the poor, often referred to as social housing, organized separately and not competing with the profit rental sector. Its objective is to create accommodation for groups not able to participate in the general housing market.

(EU-SILC) including households in "regular" housing; people who became homeless after an eviction were much less likely to be included in the interview sample (Kenna *et al.* 2016).

The DEVS-Database

The DEVS-database (Dynamics of Evictions in Sweden) is based on data from the Swedish Bailiff and contains all events in summary proceedings (from application to ruling) between January 2009 and August 2012, and all stages in the execution process (from application to eviction) between January 2009 and March 2012. The database includes approximately 120 000 cases of summary proceedings of which 113 000 are unique case-IDs. Moreover, the database includes information concerning roughly 28 000 applications for eviction and around 8 000 executed evictions.

The database is restricted to residents in Sweden (as defined by having a personal identification number). Cases that did not concern dwellings are excluded (typically closing down electricity or water, or evictions from garages and storages) or did not concern long term residents in Sweden (typically visiting students). In addition, we have excluded judicial eviction processes aimed at organizations, usually local social welfare offices (subletting dwellings to clients) or enterprises. The database also includes a 10% representative sample of the Swedish adult population (age 16+) in 2012, excluding those found in eviction data, as a point of reference ($n \approx 770\,000$).

Data from the Bailiff were linked with administrative registers from Swedish authorities, enabling us to add information about other household members (wives/husbands/children). For individuals aged 30 or below ($N \approx 20\,000$), we collected information about their parents. The comprised DEVS-database therefore contains a total of 3 200 000 individuals.

Apart from the original data from the Bailiff, information was collected from the following registers: Statistics Sweden's longitudinal integration database for health insurance and labour market studies (LISA, 1990–2013), Statistics Sweden's geography and domestic residential mobility database (1990–2013), the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention's data on criminal convictions (1990–2013), student registers from the Swedish National Agency for Education (1987/88–2013) and the National Board of Health and Welfare's medical prescription (2005–2015), patient (2001–2014) and cause-of-death (1991–2014) registers. We also gathered information from the National Board of Institutional care on compulsory care for young people with psychosocial problems and adults with substance abuse (2000–2014). Finally, the database also includes background information from Statistics of Sweden such as country of birth and sex.

The DEVS-databases includes cases which end before the eviction and where tenants have avoided eviction (either by moving beforehand or regaining their lease) as well as cases that carry through the whole legal process and end in an executed eviction. In this context, the "leaky funnel" metaphor seems to be a rather valid description of the eviction process in Sweden; of all applications for summary proceedings 19% carry over to applications for evictions and approximately 6% are actually enforced. For about 13% of the applications for execution of an eviction we have no other information than where the ruling was made (summary proceedings prior to January 2009, rent tribunals, or district courts). We return to the flow of cases in summary proceedings below.

Description of Applications and Landlords' Claims

Of the applications for summary proceedings registered from 2009 to 2012, the majority (60%) concern individuals who appear more than once. It is not unusual that a single eviction event, concerning the same dwelling, renders several applications due to the "back-and-forth" character of the process. Applications could be returned by the Bailiff to the plaintiff due to minor administrative errors, or withdrawn applications repeated due to broken agreements of debtors. A small proportion of the applications (14%) concern more than one individual, so-called "shared cases". These are most often cases where two parties share a rental lease.

Table 1. Characteristics of Cases in the Eviction Process. Percentages

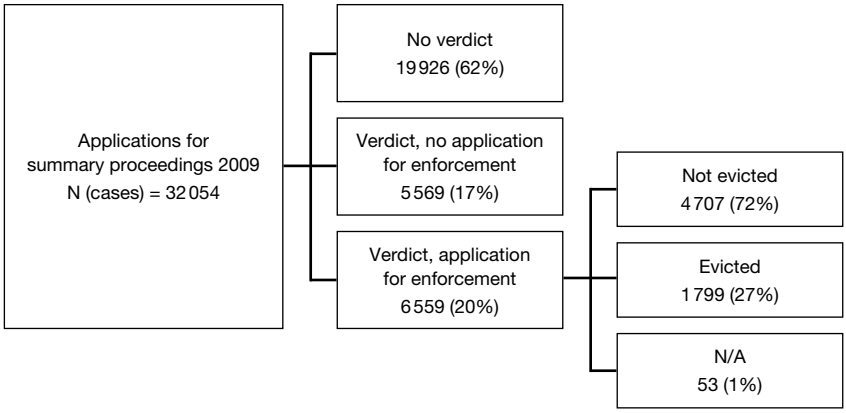
	Applications for summary proceeding	Applications for enforcement of eviction	Executed evictions
Time period	Jan 2009 – Aug 2012	Jan 2009 – Mar 2012	Jan 2009 – Mar 2012
Tenure form			
-rented	92	93	92
-owner-occupied	6	6	5
-student	1	0.2	0.2
-special lease	1	0.3	0.4
-N/A	1	1	2
Reasons given by the landlord			
-rent arrears	98	97	95
-anti-social behaviour	1	1	2
-other; N/A	1	2	3
Total N (cases)	119 966	26 591[i]	7 733

[i] of which 23 121 are found in the summary proceeding files.

Although risk factors for evictions in Europe are related to various economic, social and individual factors (Kenna *et al*., 2016), research has shown that the majority of applications for summary proceedings, in Sweden as in Europe at large, are due to unpaid rents (Kenna *et al*., 2016). Another common reason is repeated late payments, suspected also to be used by landlords to evict undesired tenants. The objectivity of repeated late payments make this an easier way to succeed with an application for eviction compared to the higher threshold for evidence concerning undesirable conduct. This is reflected in Table 1 where 98% of cases in summary proceedings and 95% of the evictions are caused by rental arrears. Thus, the landlord states deviant behaviour as the ground for terminating the lease in a very small proportion of cases.

Tenure may affect the opportunity structures for residents and over 90% of the cases in the DEVS-database concern rented housing, while 5 to 6% concern owner-occupied housing (see Table 1).

Figure 1. The Flow of Cases from Summary Proceedings to Enforcement 2009.



In order to follow the flow of cases through the various phases, we selected all applications for summary proceedings during the first year in our observation period, i.e. 2009. The outcome of these cases is illustrated in Figure 1. The 62% that receive no verdict in the summary proceeding are, for example, cases where there was some formal error in the application or where the lease was regained during the three-week regaining period. In the 17% of applications with a verdict but where an enforcement application was not made, the lease was most likely regained or the social services took over the contract. It is also possible that the debtors abandoned the dwelling to avoid an executed eviction. Of around 32 000

applications for a summary proceeding, 20% lead to an application for enforcement, and of these cases only 27% result in enforced evictions. Thus, approximately 5% of the summary proceedings end with an executed eviction[4].

A Description of Households Facing Severe Housing Problems

From previous research, we know that individuals and households threatened by eviction make up a highly-selected group facing social and economic hardship. Important risk factors are, for example, mental illness, behavioural problems, and weak social ties (Edgar, 2009). In this section, we are for the first time in Sweden able to describe the socioeconomic situation and health of people threatened by eviction, providing unique national information about a group of persons at the margins of the housing market[5].

Table 2 provides an overview of the situation at three stages of the eviction process: 1) at the last occurrence of an application for summary proceeding, 2) at the time of first application for eviction enforcement, and 3) at the time of actual eviction.

Men are clearly overrepresented in the group facing severe housing problems, and this gender imbalance increases as the eviction process passes through the three judicial stages. The overrepresentation of men is partly due to the fact that they are more frequently leaseholders. The increased imbalance throughout the eviction process is harder to explain, but to the fact that men are less likely to be single parents and as shown in the table, the prevalence of families with children decreases across the eviction process. Furthermore, single men are subject to stricter means-testing in relation to social assistance benefits (Holmlund, 2009).

Despite the overall reduction of risk across the eviction process, the proportion of single parents is higher among the evicted compared to their proportion in the population as a whole. Married/cohabiting parents, on the other hand, are underrepresented among the evicted. In total, two fifths of the applications for eviction concern households with children under the age of 18. The proportion declines as the legal process moves towards enforced evictions, which probably reflects a greater engagement from the social services. Nonetheless, it is worth pointing out that more than one fourth of the evicted households include children.

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4 Note that of the total number of application for enforcement 10–15% come from district courts and rent tribunals (Table 1).

5 Similar reports are available in Denmark (Christensen and Nielsen, 2009; Høst *et al*., 2012; Christensen *et al*., 2015) and Norway (Holm and Astrup, 2009).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for the Reference Population and for the Population at Different Stages of the Eviction Process 2009-2012. Percentages and means.

	Applications for summary proceedings[i]	Applications for enforcement of eviction[ii]	Evicted[ii]	Reference pop. 2012
Men	56.1	59.3	66.7	49.3
Women	43.9	40.7	33.3	50.7
Family type:				
Married/cohab. no children	4.2	3.5	3.1	23.0
Married/cohab. with children	18.4	16.4	10.9	32.2
Single parent household	21.4	21.6	15.8	7.9
Single household. no children	56.0	58.5	70.3	36.6
Mean age	40.2	41.3	41.4	50.5
Type of Municipality:				
Metropolitan	17.4	14.3	18.2	17.8
Suburban	11.2	10.1	10.9	15.3
Large cities	33.1	32.6	29.5	27.7
Commuter municipality	5.7	6.4	5.9	6.4
Sparsely populated	2.2	2.5	2.1	3.1
Manufacturing municipality	6.0	7.4	6.6	6.2
Other, > 25 000 inhab.	15.2	15.7	16.7	13.6
Other, 15-25 000 inhab.	6.9	8.2	7.4	7.0
Other, < 15 000 inhab.	2.2	2.9	2.6	2.8
Country/region of birth:				
Sweden	66.5	71.2	70.7	85.0
Other Nordic	1.5	1.5	1.7	1.0
Other West[iii]	4.0	4.0	4.2	2.8
Other Europe[iv]	5.0	4.4	3.7	2.5
Middle East	9.0	6.9	6.9	3.3
Other[v]	13.9	12.0	12.7	5.4
Educational level:				
Lower secondary; n/a	35.2	36.4	39.0	20.8
Upper secondary	49.9	52.6	50.4	45.4
Tertiary	14.9	10.9	10.5	33.8
No labour market income[vi]	38.2	42.6	51.3	14.6
Equiv. disp. household inc.[vi]	122 541	117 143	104 202	206 875
No. of years with Social Assistance[viii]:				
0	42.4	32.4	31.1	92.6
1	15.7	18.5	18.5	2.6
2	12.1	14.1	13.5	1.5
3	9.9	12.0	12.1	1.0
4	8.4	10.0	10.6	.8
5	11.6	12.9	14.2	1.4

	Applications for summary proceedings[i]	Applications for enforcement of eviction[ii]	Evicted[iii]	Reference pop. 2012
Criminal conviction [ix]:				
0	57.5	50.6	42.0	86.3
1	17.8	18.9	18.4	8.7
2+	24.7	30.5	39.6	4.9
Mean no. hospital stays[x]:				
All diagnoses	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.4
Psych. Diagnoses	0.7	0.8	1.2	0.2
N	70124	22642	7170	706017

[i] Refers to registration year of the first application.

[ii] Refers to last registration year for enforcement.

[iii] EU-25, other Western Europe, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, USA.

[iv] Former Soviet Union European part, Romania, Bulgaria, Balkan except Greece.

[v] Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and Asia except the Middle East.

[vi] In active ages: 25–54.

[vii] SEK. Including negative incomes. Equalized for household size where first adult=1; second adult=0.51; additional adults=0.6; first child (0–19) =0.52; additional children (0–19) =0.42.

[viii] Any means tested social assistance receipt in the year within 5 years from reference year.

[ix] Since 1990.

[x] Within 10 years from reference year.

Single person households dominate the group exposed to actual eviction. Persons above age 65 make up only a small proportion, and the proportion of young adults (age 18–24) varies between 10–14%. This age structure is reflected by the lower mean age among those in the eviction process as compared to that of the reference population.

A few comparable studies show similar results from other countries (Kenna *et al*., 2016). In, Finland, for example, single person households constitute 71% of the evictees, in Denmark 63% (court cases) and 57% in Germany. Single parent households constituted 25% of all households with a notice to quit in France, and 19% of all court cases and 14% of the evicted in Denmark. In Germany and Finland multi-person households were more often evicted than single parents. In most European countries two-parent households seem to be underrepresented compared to their share of the population, and couples without children constitute a rather small share of households threatened by eviction. As in Sweden, the percentage of single mothers and parents with children in Denmark drops significantly from the court to actual eviction, this is also likely to reflect a higher probability of receiving help from the social authorities. The overwhelming majority of adults involved in the eviction process were between 25 and 65 years old and people over 65 made up a very small proportion in European countries for which statistics were available.

There are only small differences with regard to municipality type among those in the eviction process and the population as a whole. Nor does municipality type seem to discriminate much with regard to selection inside the eviction process.

People born outside Sweden are more likely to end up in an eviction process as compared to native Swedes. The highest surplus risk is found for immigrants from the Middle East and those in the "other" category. However, within the eviction process the pattern is virtually the opposite. Here the prevalence of native Swedes increases across the process, whereas for immigrant groups it declines or remains fairly stable. Foreign-born individuals are also overrepresented in other European studies, and their share seems to decrease from court to eviction. For example, in Denmark foreign-born constitute 7% of the population, but 23% of those threatened by eviction and 19% of the evicted (Kenna *et al*., 2016). As immigrants generally have lower incomes and generally run a higher risk of unemployment, their overrepresentation is expected. It is more difficult to understand why the risk decreases from the summary proceeding to the eviction. One could speculate that to a higher degree than natives they move before an eviction is executed, because they interpret a notice to quit as an order to move. It is also possible that foreign-born families in the eviction process more often have children and thus are more likely to receive help from social authorities.

People with basic compulsory education (9 years) or less make up around a third of cases in the eviction process. The corresponding proportion in the population as a whole is only one fifth. Moreover, the proportion of individuals at this educational level increases slightly as the eviction process proceeds, whereas the proportion of people with education at the tertiary level decreases. As compared to the population as a whole there is a clear correlation between educational level and eviction risk, implying that the lower the educational level the higher the risk for ending up in an eviction process. Education level is, then, of some importance *within* the eviction process, but it is most important in terms of selection *into* the process. Economic resources and educational level are strongly correlated, but education may also reflect a greater awareness of laws and rights.

The three factors indicating aspects of income maintenance – proportion with no labour market income, disposable income and means-tested social assistance benefit receipt – all point in the expected direction. Of those facing actual eviction more than half had no labour market income and their disposable income was nearly half of that of the reference population. In the population as a whole less than 8% had received social assistance benefits within the previous five years, whereas the corresponding figure for the evicted was nearly 70%. For all these factors we observe the expected negative gradient across the eviction process.

In the reference population about 14% had been convicted for crime since 1990, whereas among those threatened by eviction just over 40% had been convicted and among evicted as many as 58%. This "criminal" gradient is even more pronounced if we only look at those with two or more convictions, where the risk is over eight times as high among the evicted as compared to the reference population. Despite this high surplus risk eviction does not seem to trigger crime (Flyghed, 2000). Criminal activity is high both before and after the eviction. However, incarceration may cause evictions as inmates fail to fulfil their obligations as tenants when serving their sentences. Besides unpaid rents, unacceptable behaviour is a more frequent cause for eviction in this group (Nilsson and Tham, 1999).

Finally, perhaps somewhat surprising, the reference population were more likely to have been hospitalized compared to the study group. This observation is, however, largely attributable to the ten year mean age difference between the two groups.[6] As could be expected, the prevalence of psychiatric diagnoses in the two groups differs substantially; persons in the study group were more likely to have been hospitalized with a psychiatric diagnosis than the reference population. Prevalence rates also vary within the study group where psychiatric diagnoses are most commonly found among persons in the last stage of the eviction process. In the first published empirical study from this project, Rojas & Stenberg (2015) found that those who had lost their legal right to their dwellings and for whom the landlord had applied for the eviction to be executed were approximately four times more likely to commit suicide than those who had not been exposed to this experience (OR=4.42), even after controlling for several demographic, socioeconomic and mental health conditions prior to the date of the judicial decision. Mental health problems affect the probability of being subjected to an eviction process in the first place, but these findings suggest that the prospect of losing one's home is a traumatic experience which may have an independent impact on the individual's psychological well-being.

Evictees do not constitute a social group in the same sense as, for example, substance abusers, prisoners, and people in institutional care or homeless persons. An evictee is basically defined by their present status in a judicial/formal process and not by their social status or welfare problems per se – and in that way the group is more transient than the other examples. Nonetheless, the status as an evictee is associated with great risks of exclusion and disadvantage.

It is important to bear in mind that our results describe selection processes at different stages rather than an assessment of how experiences of an eviction process affects individuals. It is reasonable to assume that cases that disappear

6 When we restrict the analysis to the age group 20–40 we found no differences between the groups (not shown).

throughout the process largely represent tenants who have managed to regain their lease by themselves or with the help of the social services. Potentially, tenants who regain their lease or move before being evicted have greater resources or social relations to aid them in finding new housing arrangements compared to those who stay until they are vacated. It has, however, not been possible to test this hypothesis until now due to absence of relevant data. In order to increase our understanding of the causal links in the eviction process, individuals must be followed longitudinally. Such research questions and appropriate methodology are readily applicable to the data provided by this project and are likely to lead to important new insights for policy and practice.

Conclusion

Severe housing problems, evictions and homelessness have been rising in Europe in the wake of the financial crisis in 2008-2009. Increasing rates of poverty and unemployment have heightened the general risk of homelessness. Budgetary consolidations have diminished welfare states' capacity to alleviate and prevent evictions and other forms of severe housing problems. Households struggling with mortgages or rent arrears, high energy and utility bills and over-indebtedness face the greatest risks for eviction or repossession. Instability in the banking sector has added to the problem. The crisis has led to a sharp increase in evictions and repossessions in several EU member states and more people are now exposed to longer periods of homelessness than before the financial crisis (Busch-Geertsema *et al.*, 2014).

In this paper we have presented results from a Swedish database constructed for the purpose of increasing knowledge about housing marginalization processes. A first aim in this research project was to provide a fuller description of the eviction process. A second was to explore how evictions and eviction processes are linked to other aspects of social exclusion and the extent to which evictions and threats thereof contribute to other forms of social or health problems.

The database enables us to follow individuals from the start of the summary proceeding to an eventual executed eviction. Almost all of the cases in our study were caused by rent arrears – only 1-2% by some form of anti-social behaviour. These proportions do not change over the course of the process. Only a minority of the cases end up as executed evictions. Of all 32 000 applications for a summary proceeding in 2009, only 37% lead to a verdict, and of all verdicts, less than half were used to apply for an execution of the eviction order. Finally, of all applications for enforcement of executions, 27% actually took place. Through further analyses of these data we hope to increase our knowledge about the causes of this "leaky

funnel" -process. Two main hypotheses are that some households simply regain their lease by paying the rent arrear, and that others simply move in order to avoid an executed eviction. At present our knowledge about this process is scarce.

Although this paper is only a description of households involved in the eviction process, it is obvious that these people suffer from severe social marginalization and that the process from applications of summary proceedings to actual evictions involves a strong negative selection of individuals, with an increasing level of marginalization. In the general adult population in Sweden almost 15% do not have any labour market income, whereas among households where the landlord has applied for a summary proceeding the corresponding rate was 38%, and among those actually evicted more than half of the households lacked labour market income. Less than 8% of the Swedish population received means-tested social assistance during a period of five years before the eviction year. Among households threatened by an application of a summary proceeding the rate was 58% receiving social assistance benefits and 69% among the evicted. The same pattern prevails regarding criminal convictions and number of hospital stays related to mental health disorders.

An opposite trend appears for single-parent households where the share decreases from summary proceeding to eviction. This could be caused by a more generous provision of means-tested benefits and greater societal support to such families. Single parents are more likely to be defined as deserving poor, compared to, for example, single males which are the dominant types of households in eviction processes.

Research on persons who have actually been evicted has typically found an accumulation of problems, where the eviction itself may represent an additional trauma/crisis. Housing market vulnerability and the risk of exclusion are mainly effects of poverty, which, in turn, is strongly related to a person's position on the labour market. Partly as a result of the dismantling of a comprehensive social protection system – traditionally a trademark of the Swedish welfare state – relative poverty rates have been on the rise for several decades. Since the unemployment crisis of the early 1990s the Swedish labour market has tightened significantly as well, where new entrants, particularly youth and immigrants, have great difficulty finding permanent employment. How these long term societal trends have affected the link between poverty, precarious employment, access to housing – and evictions – is not possible to explore with DEVS data, but data from the limited time span presented in this study suggest that such links are evident. However, these observations may of course merely reflect selection of vulnerable individuals and we would therefore like to point out the need to investigate the reciprocity of housing problems and problems in other important spheres. Potentially, severe housing problems can also be "triggers" in processes of marginalization and ill health or at least obstacles towards social inclusion. Largely due to the lack of longitudinal data

this aspect of housing marginalization is mostly overlooked in current research. Therefore, the second aim of this research project is to study housing marginalization processes longitudinally.

In summary, we believe that the database presented in this article will provide empirical foundation for ground-breaking research into the dynamics at the margins of housing markets. In terms of both exclusion and reestablishment on the housing market, the database can help shed new insights regarding the role of wanting resources, prevalence and importance of various risk factors, and the typical as well as atypical courses of events. This new knowledge can be used to investigate links between marginalization processes in different social arenas or processes such as the labour market, family life, or poverty.

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Homelessness Policies in Crisis Greece: The Case of the Housing and Reintegration Program

Nikos Kourachanis

Panteion University, Athens, Greece

Abstract_ *The article attempts to explore the planning and implementation of the Housing and Reintegration Program through semi-structured interviews, as well as its influence on the philosophy of addressing homelessness policies in Greece. After outlining the main forms of housing support, an attempt is made to correlate them with Greek policies that focus on the changes ushered in by the Housing and Reintegration Program. The empirical section evaluates the pilot implementation of the Program as well as the broader impact of the features of homeless policies. It should be noted that, despite the various omissions and ambiguities, this is the first complete intervention made by the Greek state to tackle this particular social problem.*

Key Words_ *Homelessness, housing and reintegration, social policy, Greece, crisis, social exclusion*

Introduction

This article investigates the design and implementation of the Housing and Reintegration Program, tracing its influence on homelessness policies in Greece. This will be attempted through an examination of the attitudes of the main actors involved towards the strong and weak points of the Program during its pilot implementation. In order to develop the argument, the basic approaches to supported housing will initially be presented. Here an attempt will be made to link the Program to the developing European dialogue around 'Housing-Led' schemes. This will be

followed by a discussion of the nature of social interventions for homeless people in Greece in recent decades, along with an outline of the objectives and content of the Housing and Reintegration Program. In the empirical section, the Program will be assessed through a presentation of the field research. This will be done by highlighting the positive elements that have been introduced, and by identifying omissions as well as areas that need future improvement during the processes of its planning and implementing.

International experience has been strongly influenced by the American tradition of policies for homeless people. Two main approaches can be distinguished in the literature. The first is the "staircase of transition" and the second is Housing First (see Tsemberis and Eisenberg, 2000; Sahlin, 2005; Atherton and McNaughton Nicholls, 2008; Busch-Geertsema, 2013). Both approaches aim at housing homeless people, although with different philosophies and priorities.

The staircase of transition is a traditional form of housing provision, the basic philosophy of which is the priority of treatment. The homeless person must be "housing-ready" if they are to move into independent housing. A basic prerequisite for this is to have previously resolved, with the help of social services, the problems that led to them becoming homeless in the first place (for a critical analysis, see Ridgway and Zipple, 1990). The basic idea of the staircase of transition is that different levels of progressive control and autonomy (for example, moderate requirements for shelter access, temporary accommodation or specialized hospitality facilities for social groups) are developed like a staircase that will lead to the stage of permanent housing (Busch-Geertsema, 2013, p.15).

Housing First originated in New York with the Pathways to Housing Program, its goal being to prevent homeless people with a mental illness from living on the streets (Tsemberis and Eisenberg, 2000). Its advantages include the provision of permanent independent housing, the decentralization of services, the normalization of housing and social conditions, as well as the provision of individual support to homeless people (Busch-Geertsema, 2013, p.211). In contrast to the staircase of transition, Housing First's priority is immediate housing. The homeless person is immediately placed into autonomous housing, with support services to address their problems being offered afterwards (Busch-Geertsema, 2012).

With Housing First, access and accommodation in a residence are independent of the services received or the fulfilment of other conditions. Housing autonomy is not the culmination of a series of reintegration measures, but a human right. The goal here is for the homeless person to achieve a sense of security and then to utilize the social services that they need (Pleace and Bretherton, 2013, pp.26-7).

In Europe, versions of Housing First have been implemented in slightly different ways, leading to Housing-Led schemes. The Housing-Led approach is increasingly being recognized as an effective intervention for reducing homelessness. Its main features are access to stable housing solutions as soon as possible, targeted interventions for households that are at risk of becoming homeless, and the provision of personalized solutions based on each individual's needs. Such support addresses issues such as tenancy maintenance, social inclusion, employment, health and well-being for people who are living in housing, rather than at a stage prior to re-housing. Moreover, it is delivered on a "floating" basis rather than in an institutional setting (FEANTSA, 2013, pp.4- 5).

Along with the emergence of Housing-Led in Europe, efforts to construct expanded typologies of social services for the homeless can be observed. Edgar *et al.* (2007, p.72) go as far as distinguishing five different types: firstly, housing services (emergency shelters, temporary hostels, supported or transitional housing). Secondly, non-housing services (day centers, counseling centers). Thirdly, housing services that are intended for other social groups but that can also be used by homeless people (hotels, rehabilitation centers, etc.). Fourthly, services for the general population from which the homeless can also benefit (advisory services, municipal services, health and social services). And, fifthly, special services for specific groups (psychiatric services, rehabilitation facilities).

In Greece, policies to tackle homelessness have historically been insufficiently developed (Sapounakis, 1997; Arapoglou, 2002; Maloutas, 2012). Their dominant traits have been their weak presence, a lack of coordination, high fragmentation and distinct charitable rhetoric, as these actions were implemented mainly by voluntary and church bodies (Arapoglou, 2004). Although these policies in Greece did not have any clear intervention philosophy, the services had an element of the staircase of transition approach (Arapoglou *et al*., 2015a). And this is because the focus of the services for the homeless were the emergency services (shelters with a limited time stay, soup kitchens, etc.), which embodied forms of social control (Sapounakis, 1998).

The economic crisis has had a definite impact on rates of poverty and social exclusion in Greek society (Petmesidou, 2013; Papatheodorou, 2014), resulting in a qualitative and quantitative increase in homelessness (Arapoglou and Gounis, 2015; Kourachanis, 2015a). Despite the negative developments, the spirit of homelessness interventions for the homeless has not changed (Kourachanis, 2015b). From 2009 to 2015, the character of the measures appears to be the product of model for the emergency management of the social crisis (Arapoglou and Gounis, 2014; Arapoglou *et al*., 2015b). In this model, civil society acts as a substitute for

state-led social policy or private companies, with interventions that aim at alleviating the most extreme and publicly visible consequences experienced by homeless and other vulnerable groups (Arapoglou *et al*., 2015a; Kourachanis, 2015b).

The Housing and Reintegration Program may usher in the beginnings of a different philosophy, and it is an initiative that is oriented to the long term. The Program has prioritized accommodation in self-catering apartments, and not in transitional or emergency accommodation (Arapoglou and Gounis, 2015, p.15).

Individual aspects of the Housing and Regeneration Program appear to diverge from the philosophy of Housing-Led schemes. Elements such as the immediate placing of beneficiaries in autonomous housing before any other intervention and connecting it to other forms of social support, such as subsidized work, give the impression that the Program adopts this approach. The thorough discussion below of the planning and implementation framework will show if aspects of the Program moved in this direction.

Objectives and Content of the Housing and Reintegration Program

The Housing and Reintegration Program was launched in September 2014 and the pilot Program was implemented in July 2015 for a period of twelve months. It is a specialized intervention measure that arises from the recognition of the homeless[1] as a Vulnerable Social Group (Article 29 of Law 4052/2012). It is also encouraged by Law 4254/2014, which foresees the possibility of implementing Programs or activities for homeless people. The Program was designed by the Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Welfare and it was decided that it would be implemented by Regions, Municipalities, NGOs and church bodies.

The Housing and Reintegration Program was not part of a wider strategy to tackle the lack of housing. On the contrary, its creation was decided upon under conditions of great pressure. In 2013, the then Prime Minister Antonis Samaras announced that €20m of the primary surplus, which resulted from the budget cuts stipulated by the bailout programs, were to be used for measures to help the poor and unemployed, such as supporting soup kitchens, bolstering the work of the Church and NGOs, and creating a new program for social interventions. The General Directorate for Social Welfare of the Ministry of Labor, Social Insurance and Social Solidarity was requested

[1] The selected definition, although compatible with the ETHOS typology of FEANSTA, has received extensive criticism as it does not include homeless migrants among the beneficiaries of the social provisions if they did not have an official residency permit (see Arapoglou and Gounis 2015; Kourachanis 2015a)

immediately to design a program that would aim at housing those homeless living on the streets or in hostels. No in-depth negotiation with the involved agencies took place as part of the design of the Program. The inclusion of those at risk of housing exclusion among the beneficiaries of the intervention as well as the Employment Reintegration pillar were added in the later phases of the planning.

According to the text of the Invitation, the aim of the Program is the "transition from emergency accommodation facilities and Social Hostels to independent housing solutions" (Ministry of Labour, 2014). The target groups of the action were: firstly, families and people who are accommodated in Social Homeless Hostels and shelters or who make use of the Homeless Day Center services; secondly, families and individuals who have been registered as homeless by the social services of the Municipalities or the Centers for Social Welfare; thirdly, women who are accommodated in Women's Shelters for victims of violence; and, fourthly, people who are hosted in Child Protection Structures, are at least 18 years of age and are not in education (Ministry of Labour, 2014, p.3).

The Program is structured on two pillars, that of Housing and that of Reintegration. It had an initial budget of €9.25m and was implemented nationwide[2]. The specific objective of the Housing pillar is the direct transition to autonomous forms of living through the provision of housing and social care services. The specific objective of the Reintegration pillar is the return to the community by providing services for reintegration into employment.

In terms of the quantitative objectives, the beneficiaries of the Program were estimated at about 1 200 people. Of these, at least 40% from each action plan were required to fulfil both the two pillars. The cost of the action was not to exceed €11 000 per recipient for both pillars or €5 500 for beneficiaries who would only make use of the housing pillar. Based on the above figures, the promoters had to offer accommodation services, funds for basic necessities, psychosocial support, employment and legal counseling, and financial management, as well as to interface with the relevant departments (Ministry of Labor, 2014, pp.4-5).

In order to select the agencies that were to implement the Program, an invitation was issued by the Managing Authority outlining the criteria for participation as well as the evaluation criteria. These were in the form of a list of official preconditions that each interested agency had to fulfill, along with an evaluation of the thematic content of each action plan that it was submitting. For this purpose, an Evaluation Committee was established to assess the applications and proposed action plans.

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2 Specifically, 55% of operations will be fulfilled in the Regional unit of Attiki, 20% of the Regional Unit of Salonika and the remaining 25% in the geographical areas of the rest of Greece.

The candidate agencies had to explain the main goals of their proposals in their action plans as well as: the categories of homeless people that they had selected to include in the Program; the ways in which they would communicate with and inform them; their evaluation criteria; the scientific team from the agency that would work with homeless persons; and the social actions that it would implement in order to fulfill the Program. For all the above measures, general directions were given by the Managing Authority. From the action plans submitted by the agencies that were examined, it was apparent that their proposals were greatly influenced by these directions. Most agencies attempted to incorporate them in a very general and vague way, in order to secure funding for their plans.

More specifically, the benefits offered under the Housing pillar state that each apartment should cover toilet space requirements, and have a kitchen, heating, bedroom and anything else that is required for the running of an average household. The beneficiary family had the opportunity to stay in an independent apartment that met the needs of its members, while individuals could choose a room or an apartment or to cohabit with another person in a two-bedroom apartment. Renting apartments in the same building was permitted for 10% of the total beneficiaries of each project (Ministry of Labor, 2014, p.6).

Table 1: First Pillar Actions – Housing Spending

Housing Costs	Individual People	Families
Rent coverage up to 12 months	Up to €180 / month (1 person) Up to €240 / month (2 people)	Up to €280 / month
Expenses coverage for repairing existing housing	Up to €3 600 (lump sum)	Up to €3 600 (lump sum)
Household spending, basic clothing – footwear needs and social utilities	Up to €1 500 (lump sum)	Up to €2 000 (lump sum)
Expenditure for daily needs (food, travel, etc.)	Up to €200 / month	Up to €250 / month
Temporary homeless adult underwriting costs	Up to €300 / month for accommodation and living expenses in a foster family and up to €100 / month for personal expenses	

Source: Ministry of Labour (2014, p.9)

As regards the second pillar, much attention was paid to the effort to support beneficiaries through information activities and employment counseling, as well as through the development of personal skills. Based on this support, efforts were made to pursue their targeted links with the labor market. The beneficiaries were asked to choose between four alternative forms of enterprise: firstly, work experience in the private sector; secondly, to provide counseling and financial support

measures for the establishment of an individual enterprise; thirdly, employment in the agricultural sector; alternatively, the beneficiaries could receive a training voucher. For each proposed project, there was a quota system according to which beneficiaries were distributed into different types of employment (30% of the beneficiaries of each project would be earmarked for work experience in the private sector, 30% for setting up businesses, 30% for employment in agriculture, while 10% would receive a training voucher). Each organization had space in which to reallocate up to 20% of the above quota, according to any needs that arose (Ministry of Labor, 2014, pp.6-10).

Table 2: Second Pillar Actions – Employment Rehabilitation Expenditure

Employment Rehabilitation Costs	Eligible Limits
Traineeships in Private Sector Enterprises	Minimum basic salary as defined in each case by the applicable provisions, with the respective insurance contributions
Support in building enterprises / self-employment or creating a small unit	Up to €6 000 in total
Employment in the agricultural sector	Up to €6 000 in total
Training services with a Voucher	Up to €6 000 in total

Source: Ministry of Labor (2014, p.10)

As will also be discussed in the section on the results of the field research, it is noteworthy that any reference to special coverage for the needs of different categories of homeless is missing from the design of the Program. Parameters relating to specialized social interventions as part of the Program are absent. Aspects of such efforts were noted during the creation of each beneficiary's profile, as well as the actions for psychosocial support (initial stage of the Program) and provision of job advice (advanced stage of the Program) that the agencies committed to undertaking. Even so, a crucial question was the necessary adequacy of such actions, especially since they had not been specifically outlined, and only a general and vague reference given.

Fifty-seven organizations were initially included in the implementation phase of the Program. Of these, 34 were Municipalities, 15 NGOs, 5 Regional Authorities and 3 church foundations. So far €7.1m has been absorbed, or approximately 75% of the original budget. Overall, 1 031 beneficiaries have joined the Housing pillar and 323 the Employment Rehabilitation pillar. The project is nearing completion of the pilot phase and has not yet been evaluated. A first glance at the main positive and negative issues encountered in the design and implementation processes and the wider impact on the philosophy of homelessness policies in Greece is, therefore, of particular interest. The following sections describe the research methodology, the results and the general conclusions drawn.

Research Methodology

Based on the analysis thus far, I will now try to identify the positive points and the problems in the planning and implementation of the Housing and Reintegration Program. How did the design and implementation of the Program affect the general philosophy of homelessness policy responses in Greece? Do any aspects of the Program reflect a specific housing support approach and, if so, which?

Given that to date the evaluation of the Program has not been completed in order to exploit the available data, it was decided to conduct field research instead. More specifically, the method of qualitative research interviews was chosen. For the needs of the project, a guide based on four subjects was developed (see MacDonald and Headlam, 2009). The first subject contained general information about the Program (content, objectives, and individual intervention fields) and policies before its implementation. The second concerned planning policy (origin, use of primary data, the documentary needs of the intervention). The third strand concerned the implementation of the policy (characteristics of the organizations, positive experiences, problems and obstacles). The last strand sought to provide an initial assessment (adequacy of resources and benefits, social impact of the intervention, its effects on the characteristics of social policies for the homeless, suggestions for future improvements).

The interviews took place during the planning and implementation phases of the Program. Fourteen interviews were done with representatives at the central, local and non-governmental levels. Four interviews were with central-level officials (policy-makers and experts), another four with the municipal social service officers, and six with members of NGOs that were participating in the Program. Furthermore, the action plans proposed by the agencies and which were approved for funding were the products of much consideration.

Research Results

The interviews produced a series of findings. Among the positive points are the innovative features of the intervention, such as the transition to independent forms of living, the connection with employment opportunities, as well as the versatile coordinating role of the managing authority. In addition to the positive dimensions, a number of issues that require future improvement were also identified.

At the planning level, the construction of the action was not based on primary data. An enlarged and heterogeneous group of beneficiaries[3] without the care of specialized means of intervention has been observed. The duration of the intervention was short and there is also uncertainty in calculating the funding/beneficiaries of the families being observed. The stipulation of the 30% quota for each employment strand created problems for rehabilitation. At the level of implementation, some bureaucratic problems were identified, as well as the preference for creaming homeless persons in the selection of beneficiaries, and the low absorption of funds. A discussion of all these issues is attempted in the following paragraphs.

The positive points of the Program

A first aspect raised by interviewees is the beneficial characteristics of the action. Interventions to address homelessness in Greece have historically been of a fragmented, piecemeal and short-term nature (Arapoglou, 2002). With this Program, for the first time in the history of the Greek state a holistic approach to the social inclusion of the homeless has been adopted. The Program offers a complete plan that starts from independent housing and ends with the placement of beneficiaries in subsidized jobs. In addition, the adoption of the ETHOS typology of FEANTSA (2006) enhances compatibility with modern European policy developments.

A key aspect of Housing-Led is the emphasis on autonomous forms of living (Pleace and Bretherton, 2013). Social policies for homelessness in Greece had never before had any clearly discernible form. However, this fragmented grid of services was more akin to the approach of the staircase of transition. The direct transition to independent housing, as provided in the first pillar of the Program, indicates an obvious orientation towards Housing-Led:

> The Program is ground-breaking for the Greek situation. For the first time we have a systematic and consistent effort to address homelessness. The beneficiaries also include people suffering from all types of homelessness. Very importantly, one of the two pillars is based on the transition to independent housing. This orientates the policies towards Housing First. All these things are being seen in Greece for the first time. (NGO Housing Policy Coordinator)

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3 Details on the characteristics of the beneficiaries of the Program are drawn exclusively from the answers given by the actors involved during its implementation stage. Unfortunately, the descriptive statistical data of the beneficiaries of the Program, as well as their demographic characteristics, their housing status before being included in the Program, and the ratios of Greeks/migrants or men/women are not known. This information should be made available with the completion of the evaluation of the pilot Program in September 2017. This is also the case with the total number of individuals who applied to the Program and for which reason were selected to be its beneficiaries.

Another positive feature is that the second pillar is based on work reintegration. In the past five years, Greece has been plagued by both high unemployment and long-term unemployment (Papatheodorou and Missos, 2013). This structural factor decisively affects the rise in homelessness (Elliott and Krivo, 1991) and has been keenly felt within Greek society during the crisis period (Kourachanis, 2016). The addition of the work parameter to the Program is on first reading positive. The question is to which kinds of employment positions were the beneficiaries guided and whether the possibility of them remaining in these positions after the conclusion of the Program has been secured. The combination of housing support and the provision of subsidized employment is an essential innovation that significantly broadens the perspectives of the beneficiaries for social integration.

> The innovative features are that it addresses the problem of homelessness in an integrated way. It doesn't only include a bed. It includes food, a home, work. And the fact is, that this is great way to get someone off the street and put him into an apartment. (Head of an NGO that participated in the Program)

Finally, the constructive attitudes of the respondents to the role of managing authority are noteworthy. During an unprecedented intervention by Greek standards, the members of the managing authority were able to supervise properly the implementation process and respond immediately to problems that arose daily. Nevertheless, there were still problems resulting from design deficiencies or the ways in which the Program was implemented. These factors will be discussed below.

Ambiguities and Omissions during the Design Stage of the Program

The absence of primary data to exploit

Greece, after seven years of deep recession and a sharp rise in poverty and social exclusion, has still not attempted to create a national register of homeless people. This results in an ignorance of the real dimensions of the problem (Kourachanis, 2015a). A major drawback, therefore, in the design of the Program was the lack of data. The Program was not developed on the basis of the real dimensions of the problem, but on the available budget.

I: For the design of the Program, was primary data used?

R: No. Primary data do not exist, nor was any research conducted before starting to design it.

I: Then how did you conclude that the action will benefit 1 200 people?

R: This was based purely on the available budget. We will be given €9m for the homeless and we calculated that with this 1 200 people can benefit. (Housing Policy Coordinator of an NGO that participated in the Program)

Such a position confirms the scholarly scientific literature that focuses on the political terms of public policy actions (see Wildavsky, 1964). In this way, the extent and features of social interventions are mainly developed on the basis of the available budget each time and not on the extent and severity of the social problem that they seek to resolve.

The short-term nature of the intervention

One major weakness is the brief duration of the Program. Within a short time the beneficiaries are expected to have been successful in their housing integration and within three months at least 40% would have to have found jobs. Interviewees considered the twelve-month duration of the Program as too short to make a meaningful social impact on the beneficiaries.

> A major drawback of the Program was its short duration. It is not possible in just a few months for a homeless person to get back into the pace of independent living, to find a job quickly and then after a short while to face the danger of ending up homeless again because the grant for the shelter and the job will end. Nobody has the time to get back on track easily within such a short time. Such actions usually last for three years. In Barcelona, for example, they provide three years of counseling, individual and group, within the framework of the intervention. If in these three years they do not succeed, then they will leave the Program. (Member of the Program's Managing Authority)

This situation contributes to the increased fragmentation and transitory nature of social policies for the homeless, exposing them to a continuous situation of social precariousness. This dimension recalls the scholarly debate around the "abeyance mechanism", a phenomenon that refers to the inadequate and temporary arrangements that social benefits offer the homeless (Hopper and Baumohl, 1994). Along with its short duration, the abeyance mechanism arises from the failure to provide a transitional framework for the beneficiaries after the end of the Program. The grant for both pillars ceases to exist by the end of the action. This puts the beneficiaries directly at risk of returning to their previous social situation.

Uncertainties in calculating the number of beneficiaries among homeless families

Confusion was caused by the calculation of the number of beneficiaries in homeless families. More specifically, when providing an additional subsidy to the recipient families, the number of children was not taken into account. In other words, the same amount of subsidy was given to families with one child as to a family with five children.

Another design oddity had to do with the calculation of the total number of beneficiaries. The minor family members were counted as beneficiaries per action plan, although they themselves did not receive a subsidy. Indeed, this measurement made it difficult to achieve the target of 40% employment in the Employment Rehabilitation pillar, since minors were estimated based on the total number of beneficiaries, even though they could not work.

I: Did a family with one child and a family with five children receive the same subsidy?

R: Yes. They were simply counted as a family. The number of children in each housing unit was of no importance. Although the number of children did not receive any additional subsidy, they were counted among the beneficiaries. And this led to increasing demands on the 40% bar for employment reintegration. This means that they counted people who were unable to work as beneficiaries. This caused problems in the disbursement of the second tranche and created the risk of having to return the first. So of the 37 beneficiaries, 17 were children and they were counted as the 40% of the total beneficiaries who had to find a job.(Employment Counselor of an NGO that participated in the Program)

Problems arising from the 30% quota per employment sector

Complications in the implementation of the Program meant that a quota of 30% per unsubsidized employment sector was introduced. For each project the bodies envisaged a quota in the transition of beneficiaries into employment (30% of the beneficiaries of each project would be earmarked for work experience in the private sector, 30% for setting up businesses, 30% for employment in agriculture and 10% would receive a training voucher). Each body had space to reallocate up to 20% of the above quota, according to needs as they arose (Ministry of Labor, 2014).

This provision caused problems in the implementation of the Program. For all the actors involved, the most feasible part was finding job positions in which to employ the beneficiaries. Only a few beneficiaries were directed towards entrepreneurship or the rural economy, while the concept of a training voucher was not adopted.

I: Many agency representatives argue that the introduction of a quota in the second pillar created problems.

R: It did not work. This was a design error that could not work and for this reason we ended it. Because you have a population but you don't know its characteristics. How can you send them to work in the rural economy, for example? (Member of the Managing Authority of the Program)

Problems that Arose in the Implementation Stage

Bureaucratic obstacles

It should be noted that approximately 2.5 years had passed from the moment when the welfare package for homelessness, to be paid for from the primary surplus, was announced until the Program actually began. This delay can be attributed to the rigidities of the Greek public sector (see Sotiropoulos, 2004) as well as to the increasing requirements of the Program itself. On this last point, the implementation of an intervention with characteristics that were unprecedented in Greece meant that the bodies involved were not initially familiar with the nature of the Program.

The objective difficulties inherent in the process also created unavoidable delays. More specifically, these included problems in the design of the process for starting a business, which foresaw the submitting of action plans by the agencies, the selection of the action plans, the process of finding beneficiaries, the preparation of their documents and the search for potential accommodation. Moreover, the above actions were to be fulfilled by bodies and services that, due to the crisis, are understaffed and therefore unable to meet serious social challenges. All these parameters created delays in the immediate implementation of the Program.

> The final Program was launched in September of 2014. After that, the proposals were evaluated and in July 2015 its implementation began. These delays are due to the administrative rigidities of the public sector and the unpreparedness of the agencies for dealing with such an issue. And, of course, there is the question of the understaffing of the agencies. It's impossible not to be diverted in what you are doing under these conditions. (Senior figure in the Ministry of Labor)

Significant difficulties in implementing the Program were encountered mainly by the municipalities. Tied down by a dysfunctional bureaucracy, they were often unable to fulfill the requirements of the Program. Many of the expenditures earmarked, from the leasing of accommodation to house repairs or the purchase of household goods, were not approved by the financial supervisors of the municipalities. This created significant problems and delays due to the increased procedural requirements of the Greek bureaucracy.

The effects of the horizontal character of the Program

The main problem that arose during the implementation of the Program was that, although it was declared as taking a broad approach as to who the beneficiaries were to be, incorporating heterogeneous groups of homeless, it foresaw the same type of intervention for all of them. It was, in other words, a horizontal action for different forms of homelessness.

More specifically, as mentioned at the beginning, the Program was based on two pillars: housing and employment reintegration. Individual actions were foreseen in order to support the two main ones: these include psychosocial support, advice in finding a job, counseling on the financial management of the grant offered by the Program and acting as intermediaries for connecting with other services.

Even though these were the directions indicated by the Invitation issued by the Managing Authority and they were superficially integrated into the action plans of the candidate agencies, from the interviews it became apparent that they were not substantially applied during the implementation stage, nor was there a check to see that they had been fulfilled. On the contrary, the agencies stressed those actions that were a precondition for receiving the individual financial installments from the Program. That is, actions for finding housing and employment.

At the same time, the Program did not foresee any specialized support as a whole. The actions that were designed were the same for all categories of homeless. In addition, those areas that could offer a more personalized approach (e.g. psycho-social support, advice on employment and financial management) were neglected and not put forward as an equal priority of the real goals of the Program.

The Program thus offered the same benefits (primarily housing and subsidized work) for different categories of homeless, which could include homeless people with psychological problems, homeless drug users, or homeless people with disabilities. Although, therefore, when it was announced the action ostensibly covered a wide range of forms of homelessness, it indirectly excluded many of these because there was no provision for the relevant tools for social integration. This is apparent from a series of factors, which will be presented below:

> The Program was very open to beneficiaries. That's good. But there should have been more specialized means of intervention. Because, for example, we wanted to work in the area of mental health, but we couldn't do this with the tools provided. Or why can't a homeless person with an addiction benefit as easily as someone who only has financial problems and no other issues? (Member of an NGO that participated in the Program)

> The general tools that the Program provides can't work like this. It provides the same, identical guide for all groups covered in the intervention. This is, then, a negative aspect of the Program – the fact that the guide for the intervention was the same for different groups of homeless people. Some were being evicted, others lived on the streets, others had psychological problems, others may have been drug users. You can't have a horizontal intervention with such different groups. (Head of an NGO that participated in the Program)

The horizontal character of the intervention resulted in the indirect exclusion of many categories of homeless people. As a result of how it developed, the Program favored the selection homeless people primarily with economic but no other kinds of problems. This was particularly observed during the implementation of the Program and the implementation of different social interventions ultimately only benefits the more able members of the target group selected (Anderson *et al*., 1993). As a result, those who benefitted from this intervention were mainly those who were homeless for economic reasons and who lived on the streets or in hostels, as well as households under threat of eviction and who were included in the category of people living in insecure accommodation.[4]

> I would say that the Program led to the selection of those who were homeless or at risk of housing exclusion due to poverty. In other words, it didn't involve either homeless people with a mental illness or drug users. After a year, these people would end up back in the same place. What makes me say this are their individual profiles and their family backgrounds. Many things. In indirect terms, the call to participate in the Program was a tool, you can't take a person who's at rock bottom and solve all his problems and then within a year expect that he will be reintegrated. Of course, if the Program had a longer duration then it could have a tremendous social impact. (Member of an NGO that participated in the Program)

This informal orientation to creaming was also encouraged by the Employment Rehabilitation pillar. In this case, the precondition for the payment to the agencies of the second tranche of funding was the placement of at least 40% of the beneficiaries of each action plan in positions of employment. Such preconditions push the agencies into selecting the most easily "treatable" of homeless people (Cloke *et al*., 2010). As a result, in order to facilitate the payment of the funding, the agencies tend to choose the most immediately "employable" of homeless people.

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4 For the typology of homelessness, see ETHOS (FEANTSA, 2006).

> Something else that played a role in the selection of the individuals who benefitted was that 40% of them had to find employment. This alone immediately determined the profile of the homeless who were to be selected. Because, to find work for almost half of the homeless beneficiaries, they should have primarily economic problems and nothing else.(Senior figure in the Ministry of Labor)

> In order for us to receive the second tranche of the funding we had to reach an employment target of 40% of each action plan. We had an issue with that because employers were suspicious about hiring homeless people in their businesses. We were thus forced to take on those homeless who were almost ready to work. (Member of a municipality that participated in the Program)

Finally, it is worth noting that the choice of beneficiaries was left almost entirely at the hands of the agencies. More specifically, the agencies were invited to inform the homeless of the action, and to select who they were to include in the Program, as well as where they were to live and work. As can be seen from the examination of the action plans, this resulted in many agencies choosing beneficiaries who were already registered with them. The most common method of assessing their needs in order to select them was to create an individual profile of each beneficiary based on an interview. It is, therefore, possible that agencies may have behaved in a clientelist way towards certain beneficiaries, but more focused research would be required in order to argue for this.

The Program's relatively low financial absorption

A final issue that was mentioned was that the Program did not manage to absorb all the initial budget. It is estimated that up to 25% of the budget was not allocated. This was because of the preconditions that needed to be fulfilled in order to receive each installment of the funding, such as the precondition that at least 40% of the beneficiaries be employed per action plan, the quota for employment sectors, as well as other, less significant, obligations.

> I: What was the greatest difficulty in absorbing the funds?

> R: The fact that for many agencies to receive the second and third installment 40% of the beneficiaries had to have achieved employment rehabilitation. And this was an objectively large number. Yet, they were obliged to achieve this because otherwise they would have to return the money from the first installment. (Member of an NGO that participated in the Program)

> And all these administrative obligations produce a large amount of funds that can't be absorbed. Just imagine, we had people who found a job on their own and did not take the benefits that they were given. Because the quota was an

> impediment. We noted this in writing, that we had funds that weren't absorbed. In the end, there was no real change. (Member of an NGO that participated in the Program)

Administrative filters, such as those discussed above, remind us that the way in which a policy is finalized, with the establishment of selection criteria, may often result in its initial plans being effectively changed during the implementation phase. In these cases, the beneficiaries may not receive the greatest possible social benefits from the intervention, because of these impediments (Van Oorschot, 1991; Curie, 2004).

Conclusions

Historically, policies to tackle homelessness in Greece have not clearly adopted a particular approach to subsidized housing. In other words, they were not influenced either by the staircase of transition or by Housing First. Even so, their insufficient and fragmented service-centric character displayed elements that were partially compatible with the staircase of transition. In the past five years, within conditions of economic crisis and an escalation of social problems, the establishment of social facilities, such as day centers for the homeless, hostels, etc. have reinforced this approach.

The Housing and Reintegration Program, even though it contains some elements that correspond to aspects of Housing-Led schemes, is first and foremost an intervention that acknowledges the need to develop forms of housing support for poor households and individuals in Greece. Even so, it is also a Program that introduces elements that create the preconditions for a future transformation in the philosophy of social policy towards the unemployed, towards a more holistic direction.

The immediate housing of the beneficiaries in autonomous housing before any other services is offered in combination with subsidized employment is shaping an innovative social intervention that offers many possibilities for the social integration of individuals who are suffering from extreme phenomena of poverty and social exclusion. In other words, what is being offered is not a one-dimensional form of housing assistance. On the contrary, the combination of accommodation and a subsidized employment position creates strong expectations for the Program's social impact.

The goals and the content of the Program indicate a tendency towards a Housing-Led orientation. This approach has been widely adopted in recent years by the member-states of the European Union. Aspects such as the shift from the provision of services, centered around social hostels and guesthouses, to the provision of independent living accommodation for a specific period of time, expanding the beneficiaries of the policy to include heterogeneous forms of home-

lessness, the separation of the provision of housing from the provision of services and its combination with employment policies are fundamental dimensions of the Program, which are compatible with Housing-Led.

Even so, a series of omissions means that the Housing and Reintegration Program has diverged from Housing-Led. A first point is the horizontal character of the Program, in contrast with the tendency towards individualization that such initiatives usually have. The Housing and Reintegration Program included among its potential beneficiaries an expanded number of diverse beneficiary groups, without developing the corresponding specialized means of intervention. A fundamental feature of Housing-Led is the flexibility and adaptability of the services, in relation to the needs of the different categories of homeless.

In contrast, the Housing and Reintegration Program offered those beneficiaries suffering from different forms of homelessness a unified framework of social provisions (housing, subsidized employment), which could be of direct use only for the cream of the homeless. In other words, primarily for those who are homeless for purely economic reasons. The result of this was that those homeless for whom immediate employment was not possible were indirectly excluded, and in large numbers. This was due to the absence of individualized tools that could respond to the multidimensional character of the lack of housing.

A further parameter that encouraged the selection of certain homeless people was the requirement for the employment rehabilitation of at least 40% of the beneficiaries per action plan. For the agencies implementing the Program, this stipulation was a precondition for the payment of the second tranche of the funding. This obliged the agencies to select those homeless who were immediately employable, in order to achieve the 40% target. As such, it was another indirect discouragement not to select those homeless people who had a number of social disadvantages.

One further negative point was the short-term nature of the intervention. The Program was initially designed to last for twelve months, during which the beneficiaries would have to be rehabilitated in terms of housing, employment and, by extension, socially. In contrast with the long-term interventions adopted in other European countries, the duration of the Housing and Reintegration Program was deemed insufficient. And this is because the social integration of an individual who is dealing with multidimensional social exclusion in such a short period of time is extremely difficult.

Despite the negative points in the planning and implementation of the Housing and Reintegration Program, it is the first comprehensive response on the part of the Greek state for tackling a serious social problem. After seven years of crisis, during which there was a marked exacerbation of social exclusion and homelessness, the development of such holistic interventions can offer solutions with a more effective

social impact. The evaluation process will produce some very useful information and feedback for the Program. It is very important that the decision to evaluate the Program is taken. Equally necessary is the political will to move from the pilot stage to the regular operation of the Program, under the umbrella of a broader strategy that still today continues to be absent from Greece.

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Homelessness Prevention: Reflecting on a Year of Pioneering Welsh Legislation in Practice

Peter K. Mackie, Ian Thomas and Jennie Bibbings

School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University, UK
Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD), Cardiff University, UK
Shelter Cymru, UK

Abstract_ *Homelessness prevention has become the dominant policy paradigm for homelessness services across the developed world. However, services have emerged in a piecemeal and selective manner, often restricted to particular towns and cities, with no requirement on local authorities to intervene. Wales is the first country where the government has sought to fully reorient services towards prevention and to make services universally available. At the heart of the Welsh approach is a pioneering legal duty on local authorities to help prevent and relieve homelessness. This paper draws upon administrative data and interviews with both service providers and service users to examine the first year of implementation under the new system. The paper finds services have been successfully reoriented towards prevention, creating a more supportive environment, reducing the number of people in temporary accommodation and decreasing the number who remain homeless after seeking help. However, outcomes are less favourable for single people and variations in service outcomes persist across Welsh local authorities. The paper concludes that whilst a legal right to homelessness prevention assistance is an effective driver of change, without attention to implementation and the quality of services being offered, legislation cannot realise its full potential impact.*

Keywords_ *Homelessness, housing rights, housing law, prevention, rapid re-housing, Wales*

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Introduction

In 2015, the Welsh Government introduced pioneering legislation which places a duty on local authorities to try and prevent or relieve homelessness for everyone who seeks housing assistance and is either homeless or at risk of homelessness. In no other country does a similar universal 'prevention duty' exist. However, innovations in Wales have not emerged in isolation, they are part of a wider international turn towards more prevention-focused homelessness policies (Culhane *et al.,* 2011; Parsell and Marston, 2012; Mackie, 2015; Byrne *et al.,* 2016; Szeintuch, 2016). As Mackie (2015, p.41) states, 'There has been a paradigm shift in homelessness policy-making in the developed world: we have entered an era of homelessness prevention.'

Homelessness prevention is now prominent in national homelessness strategies of many EU countries (Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, UK) and Anglosphere countries outside of the EU (Australia, USA) (Edgar, 2009; Busch-Geertsema *et al*., 2010; Gosme, 2015). These strategies, and the new Welsh legislation, focus mostly on secondary forms of prevention[1], which centre on people who are either at high risk of homelessness in the near future or who have very recently become homeless. Consequently, across Europe, the US and Australia, there is widespread delivery of prevention services such as emergency rent, security deposits, help with move-in costs, mortgage and utility assistance, tenant/landlord mediation, education and job-training (Busch-Geertsema and Fitzpatrick, 2008; Montgomery *et al*., 2013; Mackie, 2015; Byrne *et al*., 2016; Szeintuch, 2016). The aim of this paper is to situate recent Welsh developments in the wider international context, identifying distinctive components of the legislation, before examining the first year of implementation. Ultimately, the goal of this paper is to reflect on experiences in Wales in order to inform approaches towards homelessness prevention and relief in other national contexts.

Situating Welsh Homelessness Prevention Policy in an International Context

After more than a decade of innovation and policy development within the homelessness prevention paradigm, we have learnt a lot about the characteristics of effective prevention services but also the main challenges faced in implementing the prevention agenda. A comprehensive review of homelessness in the European Union published by the European Commission (2013) points towards three main

[1] For a detailed discussion of primary, secondary and tertiary conceptualisations of prevention, see Culhane *et al*. (2011), Parsell and Marston (2012), Montgomery *et al*. (2013), Mackie (2015) and Szeintuch (2016)

characteristics of effective prevention services. Firstly, effective services are *timely*. For example, across Europe there are many examples where public and private landlords are required to notify authorities when rent payment problems arise (Amsterdam, Sweden) or when an eviction procedure is initiated (Vienna) (European Commission, 2013). Secondly, services are *individualised*, rather than offering a generic solution. Thirdly, services are *persistent* in their endeavours to make and retain contact with people facing homelessness. For example, in Austria letters are repeatedly sent to tenants in financial difficulty and home visits are offered, resulting in markedly improved contact rates (European Commission, 2013).

A review of key homelessness literature points towards four main challenges in the implementation of the prevention agenda. Firstly, despite the increased policy priority, systems have still not been fully reoriented towards homelessness prevention, with most spending still focused on temporary accommodation (Kenna *et al*., 2016; Pleace and Culhane, 2016). For example, in England spending on temporary accommodation in 2012 was approximately £100m, whilst £70m was spent on homelessness prevention (Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), 2012). Secondly, even in countries with extensive prevention services, there tends to be geographical variation in the support availability (Cloke and Milbourne, 2006; Kenna *et al*., 2016). For example, Mackie (2014) found that access to homelessness prevention services in Wales, prior to the legislative changes, resembled a lottery. Busch-Geertsema *et al*. (2010, p.43) suggest that central and regional governments have a key role to play in ensuring a 'geographical balance of provision and a certain (minimum) standard' and this is especially the case in countries with strong federal structures and a greater propensity for variation (Austria, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Spain, USA).

The third challenge is selectivity (Burt *et al*., 2005; Burt *et al.*, 2007; Moses *et al*., 2007; Pawson, 2007; Busch-Geertsema and Fitzpatrick, 2008; European Commission, 2013). Mackie (2015) concluded that services tend to exclude for two reasons. Firstly, the individual is perceived to be capable of finding their own solution. This selective approach is particularly common in the USA (Theodos *et al*., 2012; Byrne *et al*., 2016; Greer *et al*., 2016; Szeintuch, 2016) and results in a situation where households with support needs will go unaided, and yet a small amount of targeted assistance may have been highly beneficial. Secondly, prevention services often exclude those with very high support needs. For example, some Swedish services will not work with people who refuse to abstain from drugs and alcohol (Sahlin, 2005; Busch-Geertsema *et al*., 2010). The final challenge is a lack of any requirement to deliver homelessness prevention services. In its review of homelessness in the European Union, the EU Commission (2013, p.17) succinctly summarised this concern, 'While some form of basic service access is usually available to homeless people in Member States, it is not always guaranteed.'

These key challenges are being grappled with across Europe, the USA and Australia. The new Welsh legislation seeks to address many of these challenges, whilst also incorporating key service characteristics known to lead to effective homelessness prevention. In the following section we describe the evolution of the new approach, setting it in the context of what existed previously in Wales and across the UK.

Homelessness Prevention Policy Development in the UK

Since the commencement of the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977, homelessness policy in the UK has been underpinned by legislation entitling homeless people to settled accommodation[2]. Fitzpatrick and Pawson (2016, p.545) state 'there is no other country where homeless people have a legal entitlement to settled housing that is routinely enforced by the courts.' Until the early 2000s, approaches across the four UK nations (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) remained very similar. The legislation adopted a broad definition of homelessness, including literally homeless households and also those who have accommodation but it is not reasonable for them to remain. Additionally, the definition extended to those who were likely to become homeless within 28 days (threatened with homelessness). If a household was homeless they would approach the local authority for help. The local authority would then be under a duty to provide temporary accommodation until settled accommodation was secured. However, this duty was only owed where people were eligible for government-funded assistance, they did not become homeless intentionally (i.e. the person deliberately did or failed to do something that resulted in the loss of accommodation), and they were judged to be in priority need. A household is in priority need if it contains dependent children, a pregnant woman or a vulnerable adult. For those people not owed accommodation by the local authority, generally single people, no meaningful help had to be provided. Significantly, households had the ability to challenge the local authority's decision through the courts.

Since the start of devolution in 1999, whereby powers were transferred from the UK Government to parliament in Scotland and National Assemblies in Wales and Northern Ireland, approaches towards homelessness policy have diverged. In the early 2000s, homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing services emerged alongside the statutory system in England and Wales (Mackie, 2015; Fitzpatrick and Pawson, 2016). Prevention services were pursued through the 'housing options' model, which Wilcox and Fitzpatrick (2010, p.42) describe:

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2 See Wilcox and Fitzpatrick (2010) or Fitzpatrick and Pleace (2012) for a detailed discussion of the UK legislative framework.

> Under this preventative model, households approaching a local authority for assistance with housing are given a formal interview offering advice on all of their 'housing options'. This may include being directed to services such as family mediation or rent deposit guarantee schemes that are designed to prevent the need to make a statutory homelessness application.

In Scotland, a different pattern emerged. The turn of the century saw legislative change that committed to the abolition of the priority need test by 2012; essentially entitling all homeless households to settled accommodation. Rising numbers of homeless households were accommodated until around 2006 when it became clear that the highly progressive 2012 commitment could not be met without embracing homelessness prevention. Hence, Scottish Government also encouraged prevention and rapid rehousing services to be developed alongside the extensive statutory safety net.

Developments in homelessness prevention across the UK suffered all the key challenges documented across Europe and elsewhere: services were not fully reoriented towards prevention (Pleace and Culhane, 2016); there was geographical variation in the availability of support (Cloke and Milbourne, 2006; Mackie, 2014), provision of services was selective (Mackie, 2015), and there was a lack of any clear duty to take steps to prevent homelessness – prevention services sat outside of the legislative framework (Mackie, 2015). In response to these challenges, Welsh Government re-examined its homelessness legislation. It commissioned a review which published five reports (Mackie and Hoffman, 2011; Fitzpatrick *et al*., 2012; Mackie *et al*., 2012a; Mackie *et al*., 2012b; Mackie *et al*., 2012c) and the recommendations formed the basis of the pioneering changes introduced in the Housing (Wales) Act 2014.

An Overview of the Welsh Homelessness Legislation

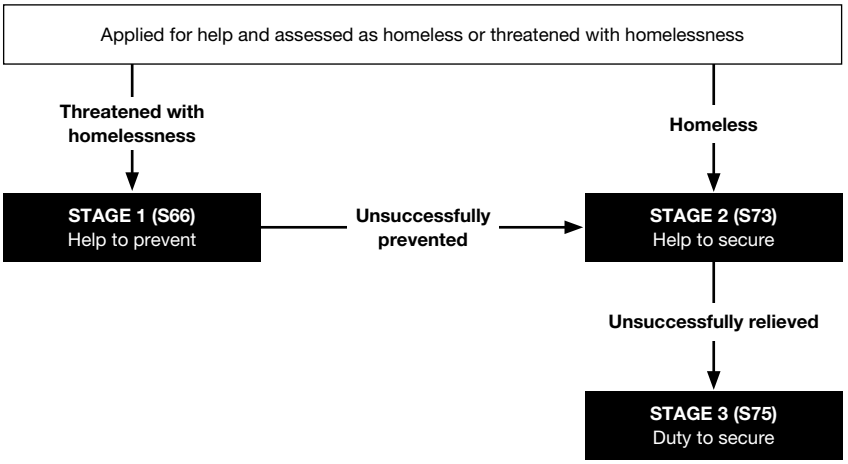
The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 attempts to prioritise homelessness prevention, reorienting the focus of services (and funding[3]). Most notably, the act is based on a firm belief by Welsh Government that 'everyone can have access to the help that they need, to secure a home.' (Welsh Assembly Government, 2009, p.26), hence access to prevention services is a universal right, with all local authorities required to take steps to help. By bringing prevention services into the statutory framework, for the first time people will be able to challenge the local authority

3 Funding was made available to local authorities to enable them to transition their services into the new model. In 2015-16 the total fund was £5.6 million, reducing to £3 million in 2016-17.

for failing to take steps to help prevent homelessness. The new legislation, like the previous legislation, is complex and we set out to describe its key components in the remainder of this section[4].

Figure 1 illustrates the Welsh homelessness legislation process. To access help, a person must apply at their local authority and if they are eligible for public funds and they are either homeless or threatened with homelessness, the local authority has a duty to help. There are three main stages/duties[5], with people entering the system at either the first or second stage depending on whether or not they are already homeless. We will explore each stage/duty in turn.

Figure 1. Welsh Homelessness Legislation Process Under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014



If a person is threatened with homelessness when they seek help, they enter the system at *Stage 1* (Section 66 – help to prevent). The local authority must help prevent the person from becoming homeless. Statutory guidance specifies the minimum set of interventions that local authorities ought to have in place (Table 1) and local authorities are expected to consider the most appropriate intervention(s) for each person. The duty ends in three main ways: homelessness is prevented (accommodation is available for at least 6 months), the household becomes homeless, or some 'other'

4 This description of the Welsh legislation is a simplification of an exceptionally complex legal framework. For full details, the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and accompanying statutory guidance should be consulted.

5 Welsh Government does not refer to 'stages' in the legislation nor published statistics, however we have interpreted these as stages and we find it an effective mechanism for communicating a very complex system.

reason (either an offer is refused or they fail to cooperate). Notably, the legislation sets rights alongside responsibilities. Individuals must cooperate with the local authority, which in practice means also taking action to secure their own solution. Statutory guidance recommends that personal housing plans are devised with each household, identifying the key steps that both the local authority and the household will take. This is a significant departure from previous legislation.

Where homelessness cannot be prevented at Stage 1, or a person applies for assistance and they are already homeless, they enter *Stage 2* (Section 73 – help to secure) where local authorities must help to secure accommodation. This does not mean local authorities are required to provide accommodation, rather they have 56 days to take steps to help, again drawing from the minimum set of interventions identified in Table 1. Local authorities must assist all households. The duty again ends in three main ways: homelessness is relieved (accommodation is available for at least 6 months), homelessness is unsuccessfully relieved (having taken steps to help, no solution is found within 56 days), or some 'other' reason (either an offer is refused or they fail to cooperate).

Table 1. Interventions That Local Authorities in Wales Ought to Have in Place to Prevent and Relieve Homelessness

Accommodation-based • Options to facilitate access to the Private Rented Sector (PRS) • Arranging accommodation with relatives and friends • Access to supported housing • Crisis intervention – securing accommodation immediately	**Specific population groups** • Welfare services for armed forces personnel/ veterans • Options for the accommodation of vulnerable people • Action to support disabled applicants • Working in prisons prior to release • Domestic abuse services
Advice • Housing Options Advisors • Specialist advice on benefits and debts • Independent housing advice • Employment and training advice	**Support** • Mediation and conciliation • Intensive Family Support Teams • Housing/Tenancy support • Action to resolve anti-social behaviour
Joint working • Joint working between Local Authorities and RSLs • Joint approaches with services such as Social Care and Health	**Financial** • Financial payments • Action to intervene with mortgage arrears

Source: Adapted from Welsh Government Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness

Homeless households can only enter *Stage 3* (Section 75 – duty to secure) if steps at Stage 2 were unsuccessful. The Stage 3 duty largely replicates the previous system, placing an absolute duty on local authorities to secure accommodation

only for people deemed to be in priority need and unintentionally homeless. If a household is likely to be in priority need at Stage 3 they are also entitled to interim accommodation. Where this final duty is owed, there are two main ways in which the duty ends: the household is successfully accommodated or some 'other' reason (e.g. an offer is refused).

Methodology

This paper is based on a mixed methodological study incorporating an analysis of annual homelessness statistics returned by all 22 local authorities to Welsh Government, in-depth interviews with 50 people who have used homelessness services since the commencement of the new legislation, and interviews with 11 key individuals from local authorities and third sector organisations. In this brief section we summarise our approach in relation to each of these methods.

Local authorities are required to collect data on all households who apply for homelessness assistance. This data is returned in aggregated form to Welsh Government and we have drawn upon the first annual returns (April 2015 – March 2016) to inform our review[6]. Data shows the reasons why people are homeless, the types of assistance offered, levels of temporary accommodation use, and outcomes under each stage of the legislation, disaggregated by age, gender and household type. Our analysis options were limited given the data is returned in aggregated form, hence only descriptive statistics and basic QGIS maps have been produced[7].

In order to elicit an informed and balanced set of perspectives on the implementation of the new legislation, in-depth interviews were conducted with two types of informant between April and July 2016. First, we sought the views of 50 homeless people who had approached local authorities for assistance since the commencement of the new legislation. A purposive sample was pursued in order to ensure a wide range of experiences were captured according to gender, age and household type (Table 2). Participants were recruited face-to-face by researchers situated in local authority housing advice offices (28 people), by telephone following referral from local authorities (9 people), and face-to-face in hostels (13 people). Interviews

6 Although the homelessness statistics were designated as National Statistics (an indicator of quality and reliability) under the previous legislation, concerns over data quality and reliability resulted in a temporary de-designation of the 2015-16 statistics by the UK Statistics Authority. Welsh Government (2016) states it is confident that quality issues will be resolved and re-designation should be achieved by 2016-17.

7 Analysis in this paper is based on data from the Statistical First Release for homelessness statistics in Wales (Welsh Government, 2016) and data available from the Welsh Government's online statistical resource StatsWales.

explored people's individual experiences of seeking assistance and their perspectives on the help provided. Service providers were the second type of informant, including local authority homelessness service managers and operational managers at key voluntary sector organisations. Together they hold an excellent overarching awareness of the impacts of the new legislation on service provision at local authority level. In total, six local authority homelessness service managers and five voluntary sector organisation managers were interviewed. The interviewees were recruited from across 9 of the 22 Welsh local authorities to reflect a mix of urban/rural, northern/southern and large/small (population size) authorities. Interviews lasted between 0.5 and two hours and were conducted either by telephone or face-to-face. All interviews were transcribed and thematically analysed.

There are limitations to the research methodology which ought to be recognised. Firstly, the administrative data collected by local authorities is under review by Welsh Government because some inconsistencies were identified in local recording practices. Secondly, whilst every effort has been made to sample interviewees from a broad range of local authorities and across a range of household types, a larger study which includes interviews in all local authorities would potentially lead to more representative findings.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Interviewees Who Had Used Homelessness Services

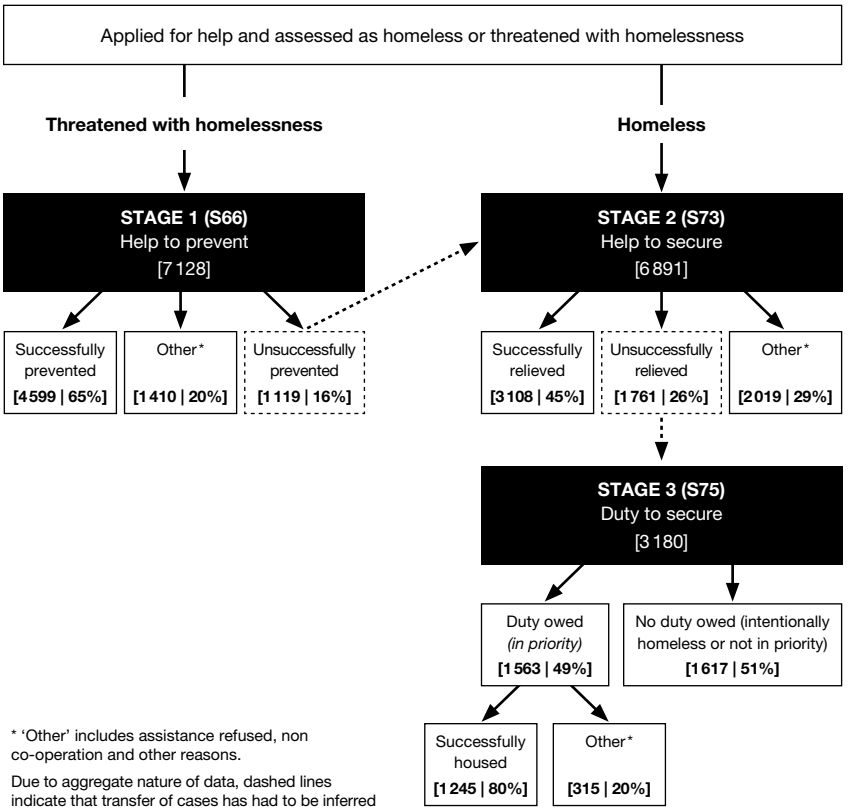
Demographic characteristic		Number of interviewees
Gender	Women	24
	Men	26
Age	16-24	10
	25-34	18
	35-44	14
	45-64	8
Household type	Single households	24
	Couple no children	1
	Single parents	18
	Couple with children	7

Reorienting Assistance Towards Homelessness Prevention

In this section we consider the extent to which the Welsh homelessness legislation has been successful in integrating and prioritising the prevention of homelessness. Figure 2 provides a more detailed illustration of the Welsh homelessness legislation process, including statistics on outcomes at each of the three stages between April 2015 and March 2016. It shows 7,128 households were given help to prevent their homelessness and in 65% of cases this was successful. A similar number of households (6,891) were given help to relieve their homelessness but the success rate

with these households was far lower (45%), a pattern that might have been anticipated given that in prevention cases the additional option of remaining in current accommodation can be pursued. The trends observed in Figure 2 certainly suggest Welsh local authorities are prioritising the prevention of homelessness, with most cases dealt with at this stage. However, there is an opportunity to ensure more households seek help earlier, therefore reducing the number of cases at the relief stage, where success rates are lower.

Figure 2. Welsh Homelessness Legislation Process, Including Outcome Data for Stages One (Help to Prevent), Two (Help to Secure) and Three (Duty to Secure), 2015-16



Notably, 20% of households at the prevention stage either refused assistance or failed to co-operate and this proportion increases to 29% at the relief stage. These figures have raised some concerns amongst third sector organisations. It might reasonably be assumed that an offer refusal is not overly problematic because the

person is likely to have access to alternative accommodation. By contrast, we know far less about housing outcomes of those who fail to cooperate. The legislation prohibits ending the duty if a failure to cooperate results from an unmet support need and yet several third sector interviewees were concerned this was the case in some instances. Also, interviews with homeless people showed a mixed awareness of the possibility that assistance could end if they failed to cooperate. It seems the co-operation duty is possibly being used unlawfully. It will be important to develop a better understanding of the impacts of the new 'responsibilities' enshrined within the Welsh legislation and that appear to affect so many – do those who fail to cooperate go on to resolve their own housing issues or does their homelessness become more entrenched? Only with this information will it be possible for Welsh Government to effectively determine whether the duty to cooperate is a desirable component of the new legislation.

At the third stage of the legislative process[8], approximately half of the households were judged to be in priority need and the majority of these (80%) were successfully accommodated. Perhaps the most significant statistic in Figure 2 is the 1 617 households (51% of all households at Stage 3) who are not in priority need and are therefore known to remain homeless at the end of the process. Whilst this is a significant number of households who remain homeless, it is 59% lower than in 2013/14 under the previous legislation, therefore providing further evidence of a positive shift towards prevention.

It was anticipated that under the new legislative framework, if homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing interventions increased and were prioritised, there would be a reduction in the number of households accommodated in expensive and often undesirable temporary accommodation. Temporary accommodation statistics are reported on a quarterly basis and they confirm expectations, showing an 18% reduction from 2 295 households accommodated during the final quarter of 2013/14 to 1 875 households accommodated in the same quarter in 2015/16. These statistical trends were corroborated by local authority key informants who suggested they now have empty properties that were previously used for temporary accommodation purposes:

> We will be handing back a number of properties at the end of April due to voids and the trend will hopefully continue. It is obviously early days. Who knows what will happen? (Local authority homelessness service manager, April 2016)

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8 The total households assisted at Stage 3 (3 180) is greater than the total number of households entering from Stage 2 because the new legislation commenced on 27th April 2015, which is three weeks into the first quarter of 2015/16. Hence, some households were assisted under the previous legislation, therefore entering immediately at Stage 3.

Whilst there has been a reduction in temporary accommodation use, there are two important caveats to this apparent success. Firstly, the removal of priority need status for prison leavers[9] is likely to have made a significant contribution to this reduction, given that they previously constituted 17% of all households owed a temporary accommodation duty. A second concern, raised by homeless people and by several third sector agencies, is the lack of entitlement to emergency accommodation, such as floor space, for most single homeless people. A duty to provide temporary accommodation to all households would be expensive but its absence means single homeless people continue to be roofless whilst steps are taken to relieve homelessness under the new legislation. Moreover, a duty to provide emergency accommodation exists in places as diverse as Denmark, Germany, New York, and Scotland.

The new Welsh legislation appears to have been successful in reorienting services towards homelessness prevention and it also seems to have driven a change in service ethos. Mackie (2014, pp.26-27) hypothesised that the new approach would lead to 'a vast cultural shift' and it seems this change has, at least to some extent, taken place. Interviews with people who have sought help under the new legislation and interviews with service managers repeatedly highlighted the supportive and caring nature of the assistance being provided – a pattern which contrasts markedly with experiences under the previous system in Wales and across the UK (Dobie *et al*., 2014; Mackie with Thomas, 2014). The comment by a single male who had accessed services under the previous legislation, and then more recently under the new legislation, rather bluntly but effectively summarises the dominant perception of most service users:

> This time round it has been totally different. Before I would have had to take my sleeping bag and my flask because you would be there for the duration of the day. The staff would have faces down to their asses, in and out of rooms moaning, you know. This time, totally different. They speak to you on a personal level, a better basis. They get you. (Homeless male, aged 35-39, July 2016)

Whilst people accessing services were overwhelmingly positive about the way they were treated, this section concludes on a cautionary message emerging from several interviewees. There are some concerns that the initial support interview,

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9 When the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 was introduced, Welsh Government also took the decision to remove the priority need status previously afforded to homeless prison leavers. Only with priority need status is there an entitlement to temporary accommodation.

although not unfriendly, felt a little divorced and bureaucratic and one homelessness service manager made a similar claim about the broader bureaucratic requirements of the legislation[10]:

> It has become very bureaucratic and paperwork heavy – that's the major thing we are finding. We spend more time keeping paperwork up to date than doing things to help people…. I'm dealing with a lot more paper work and not finding solutions. (Local authority homelessness service manager, April 2016)

Actions to Prevent and Relieve Homelessness

Welsh Government requires local authorities to consider the most appropriate interventions for each individual, allowing people who access services to have a say in the solutions they pursue. In this section we consider the extent to which assistance has been individualised, moving away from the 'rigid, inflexible system' which existed previously (Mackie, 2014, p.8). The majority of local authority homelessness service managers claimed to be implementing some form of personal housing plan, whereby people seeking assistance are involved in determining what help is provided but also reaching an agreement on the actions they should take themselves. Interviews with those accessing homelessness services support the claim that personal housing plans are being implemented, however the plans tend to be seen as bureaucratic records of the actions individuals should take, rather than an opportunity to express any significant choice. Furthermore, there seems to be limited communication between local authorities and those they are assisting after the initial housing plan has been developed:

> I've had one call since the initial interview about a month and a half ago… just asking what's my current situation? I told them that I'm still couch surfing and that's going to finish next week… I've no idea what the council's doing. (Homeless male, aged 25-29, July 2016)

Whilst there are clearly concerns about local authorities failing to communicate the actions they are taking, this does not equate to local authority inaction. Table 3 provides a summary of the many actions local authorities took in successful prevention and relief cases during 2015/16 and it demonstrates the dominance of three main solutions: securing accommodation in the (Private Rented Sector) PRS (39%), the social rented sector (30%), and in supported accommodation (12%). The

10 Respondents in this study did not comment on additional issues relating to the reorientation of services towards prevention (e.g. staff training and guidance, staff turnover, changing job roles, etc.), however this may reflect the focus of the research on implementation and experiences of services, rather than the change management process. A study of change management processes would be a particularly useful area for future investigation.

relatively low number of cases resolved using other mechanisms such as mediation and conciliation (2%) would suggest that a fairly standard and limited set of options are being pursed with individuals, implying that the full range of mechanisms local authorities ought to have are not being utilised. A caveat to these findings is that many of the actions in Table 3 are not mutually exclusive and it is likely that local authorities have opted to record actions in relation to the tenure (e.g. PRS with landlord incentive scheme), rather than record 'resolving rent or service charge arears' or 'financial payments', for example.

Table 3. Actions Taken to Prevent/Relieve Homelessness for Successful Cases, 2015/16

	Homelessness Prevented	Homelessness Relieved	Total	Percent
Private rented sector (PRS) accommodation	1959	1077	3036	39
PRS without landlord incentive scheme	*903*	*498*	*1401*	*18*
PRS with landlord incentive scheme	*819*	*579*	*1398*	*18*
Negotiation or legal advocacy	*237*	*n/a*	*237*	*3*
Social rented accommodation	*1353*	*939*	2292	30
Supported accommodation	273	624	897	12
Accommodated with friends/relatives or return home	156	240	396	5
Mediation and conciliation	171	n/a	171	2
Resolving housing and welfare benefit problems	153	n/a	153	2
Resolving rent or service charge arrears	129	n/a	129	2
Financial payments	96	n/a	96	1
Debt and financial advice	72	n/a	72	1
Homeownership*	21	3	24	0
Measure to prevent domestic abuse	9	n/a	9	0
Other assistance or support	207	225	432	6
Total	4599	3108	7707	100

*Includes mortgage arrears intervention, mortgage rescue, low cost ownership scheme

Source: Adapted from Welsh Government statistics

Qualitative evidence supports the statistics presented in Table 3, emphasising to an even greater degree, the role of the PRS as the main option considered by homelessness services. It is worth noting that security within the private rented sector in Wales is weak when compared to most other European countries (e.g. Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Sweden), with typical lease terms normally limited to six months, a two-month landlord notice period, and an ability to evict without the need to declare any specific reasons (Scanlon, 2011). Almost all of the 50 homeless interviewees had at least been asked to consider the PRS as a solution, with most initially being provided with a list of local landlords and being expected to make contact themselves. Concerns were raised by several inter-

viewees that the list of local landlords was not up-to-date, with several landlords unwilling to accommodate people in receipt of housing benefit. Whereas the provision of a list of landlords might have been the limit of assistance for single people under the previous legislation (Mackie, 2014), the key difference under the new approach is the offer of financial support when a property is found, usually in the form of a bond and rent in advance. This additional financial assistance seems to be key to opening up access to the PRS, although some local authority service managers also observed that the flow of money from local authorities to private landlords led to unintended consequences, with landlords and letting agents increasing their fees. Assistance in the PRS is not limited to financial help; for a smaller proportion of households, local authorities are clearly taking steps themselves to find and secure PRS accommodation:

> A member of [the specialist PRS Officer's] team sent me an appointment. I went to that appointment and the same day, not even half an hour [after the appointment], I had a phone call from that team saying that they've got me a place. (Homeless female, aged 25-34, July 2016)

The quantitative data and interviews with people accessing services appear to suggest a relatively formulaic prevention and rapid re-housing response is emerging which focuses on attempting to secure PRS accommodation with financial assistance. This falls significantly short of the flexible and individualised response that the legislation sought to encourage. However, many local authority homelessness service managers enthusiastically discussed the ways in which new funds for homelessness prevention and relief had enabled them to develop and introduce services such as mediation, shared accommodation, and welfare advice officers. It is possible some of these services are still being embedded.

Effective Assistance for All? Examining the Heterogeneity of Service Experiences

The main driver behind the legislative changes in Wales was a desire to move away from an all-or-nothing approach and ensure everyone has access to the help they need, wherever they seek help. This penultimate section investigates the extent to which the new approach is effectively assisting all people equally. We examine divergences according to geography and population demographics.

A geography of homelessness services

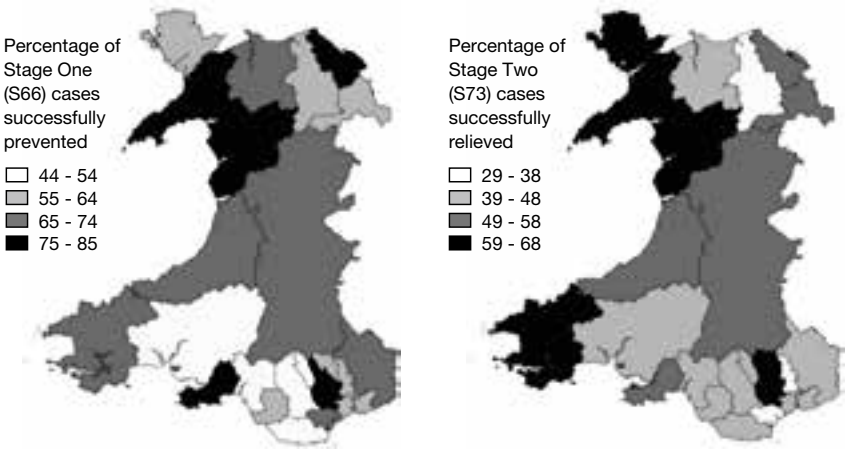
Figure 3 maps the success rates of local authorities in preventing and relieving homelessness. It shows significant variation between the 22 Welsh local authorities, with homelessness prevention (Stage 1) rates ranging from 44% to 85% and homelessness relief (Stage 2) rates ranging from 29% to 64%. These variations mean experiences of homeless people will differ dependent on the local authority where they seek help. Perhaps variation is to be expected given the flexible nature of the solutions local authorities can pursue and the encouragement given to local authorities to innovate, however it was anticipated that the baseline, above which any variation would exist, might be greater than evidenced in Figures 3 (Mackie, 2014). Our study provides no clear explanation for the different success rates in each local authority.

A second concern relating to geographical variations emerged in interviews with local authority homelessness service managers and people who had accessed services. Local connection criteria are being used in some areas to restrict access to homelessness prevention and relief services, particularly for single person households. In keeping with a broad principal of universal access, the legislation gives no grounds for local authorities to exclude people on this basis[11]. In one local authority a blanket policy exists, as illustrated by the quotation below. It seems some authorities may be unlawfully excluding individuals from support they are entitled to and yet this has not been challenged in the courts. Until such actions are challenged, or Welsh Government intervenes, these practices are likely to persist:

> People with no local connection who are homeless will not get any hostel accommodation… they also don't get any assistance with bonds or rent in advance. (Local authority homelessness service manager, April 2016)

11 A person can only be referred to another local authority at Stage 2 (help to secure) if that person will be in priority need at Stage 3. The receiving local authority then has a duty to help.

Figure 3. Homelessness Prevention and Relief Success Rates by Local Authority, 2015/16



Stage One (S66)
Help to prevent

Stage Two (S73)
Help to secure

Source: Adapted from analysis in Welsh Assembly Government (2016)

Service experiences and demographic differences

We examine service experiences according to the main demographic characteristics recorded in the Welsh Government homelessness statistics, including household type, age and gender[12]. In addition, in-depth interviews identified homeless prison leavers as a population subgroup facing a very particular set of challenges when help is sought, hence their experiences are also explored.

Previously, single people were owed no meaningful assistance in Wales, whereas under the new legislation single people constitute 44% of all prevention cases and 68% of all relief cases (Table 4). However, Table 4 highlights two prominent differences in the outcomes faced by single people when compared to other types of household (mostly families). Firstly, assistance to prevent homelessness (Stage 1) is less likely to be successful for single people (58% vs. 70%) and yet there is only a marginal difference in outcomes of efforts to relieve homelessness at Stage 2 (43% vs. 49%). One explanation for this difference is that single people are more likely to seek help to prevent homelessness because parents, other relatives or friends are no longer willing or able to accommodate them (32% vs 18%), whilst other household types are far more likely to seek help due to loss of rented or tied

[12] Whilst ethnicity is also reported to Welsh Government, the number of non-white households is too low for any meaningful comparison.

accommodation (42% vs 26%)[13]. We have already established that the majority of interventions focus on securing access to the PRS, rather than mediation or conciliation, a trend which has potentially disadvantaged single homeless people at the prevention stage given their reasons for seeking help. At the relief stage, the reasons for seeking assistance are more similar between household types and this may explain the relatively similar outcomes. The second difference is that single people are much less likely to be found a successful outcome at Stage 3 (26% vs 66%) – a pattern that is inevitable given the lack of priority need status given to single people at the third stage.

Table 4. Outcomes of Homelessness Assistance Provided Under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 by Household Type, 2015/16

	Stage One		Stage Two		Stage Three	
	Help to prevent		Help to secure		Duty to secure	
	Single	Other	Single	Other	Single	Other
Successful	58	70	43	49	26	66
Unsuccessful / non priority need*	19	13	30	28	64	23
Other**	23	17	27	23	10	10
Total outcomes (Row percent)	44	56	68	32	67	33

*Non priority need applies to Stage 3 only

**Includes assistance refused, non co-operation and other reasons

Source: Welsh Government statistics

The only significant difference in the outcomes of services in relation to age, is the higher percentage of successful outcomes for 16-17 year olds at all stages (Table 5). This is almost certainly because of the unique legal standing of homeless 16-17 year olds, who are also protected under separate Social Care legislation[14]. These children are first and foremost entitled to social care assistance, which is why so few 16-17 year olds make a homelessness application (no more than 4% of all cases). Where an application is made, social care services are likely to continue to offer support, leading to better outcomes, and at the third stage of the homelessness system they are considered to be in priority need.

The experiences of men and women are extremely similar at the prevention (Stage 1) and relief (Stage 2) stages of the system (Table 6) and it is only at the final stage, when priority need is assessed, that women experience much more successful outcomes (62% vs 23%). The gender difference at this stage reflects the role of

13 To aid the narrative of the paper and to avoid unnecessarily burdening the paper with descriptive tables, we have not included a table representing reasons for seeking prevention assistance by household type. However, this data is reported by Welsh Government in their annual homelessness statistics.

14 Previously the Children Act 1989 and now the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

women as the main carer for children; households with children are more likely to be headed by women and it is the presence of children that secures priority need status, rather than the gender of the person seeking help.

Table 5. Outcomes of homelessness assistance provided Under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 by age, 2015/16

	Stage One			Stage Two			Stage Three		
	Help to prevent			Help to secure			Duty to secure		
	16-17	18-24	25+	16-17	18-24	25+	16-17	18-24	25+
Successful	74	63	65	53	43	45	71	47	36
Unsuccessful / non priority need*	17	16	16	30	32	28	17	42	55
Other**	4	9	8	17	25	26	8	11	10
Total outcomes (Row percent)	2	26	72	4	26	70	2	27	71

*Non priority need applies to Stage 3 only

**Includes assistance refused, non co-operation and other reasons

Source: Welsh Government statistics

Table 6. Outcomes of Homelessness Assistance Provided Under the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 by Gender, 2015/16

	Stage One		Stage Two		Stage Three	
	Help to prevent		Help to secure		Duty to secure	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Successful	64	65	42	49	23	62
Unsuccessful / non priority need*	15	17	28	31	68	27
Other**	23	17	29	20	10	10
Total outcomes (Row percent)	40	60	59	41	57	43

*Non priority need applies to Stage 3 only

**Includes assistance refused, non co-operation and other reasons

Source: Welsh Government statistics

Prison leavers were identified by service managers as a population subgroup facing a very particular set of experiences under the new legislation. Prior to the legislative change, homeless prison leavers were considered to be in priority need in Wales which meant they were offered temporary accommodation and if they were not intentionally homeless they would then be provided with settled accommodation. This policy was perceived to be problematic by many local authority service managers because it essentially devolved prison and probation services of their duties to help resettle ex-offenders and caused tensions where prison leavers were prioritised over other single households (Mackie and Hoffman, 2011; Mackie *et al*., 2012a; Mackie *et al*., 2012b). Consequently, Welsh Government took the decision to remove the priority need status for prison leavers, resulting in a marked reduction

in the number of prison leavers judged to be in priority need at Stage 3. This change is both in absolute terms, falling by roughly 86%, and as a proportion of total priority need cases, from 17% in 2013-14 to 8% in 2015-16 (Table 7).

Table 7. Percentage of Households Accepted as Homeless and in Priority Need by Priority Need Group, Pre- and Post-Implementation of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014

		2013-14	2015-16	% decrease
Households with dependent children		33	40	64
Households where a member is vulnerable due to:	Prison leaver	17	8	86
	Physical or mental illness/disability	16	20	63
	Domestic violence	14	13	73
	Vulnerable young person	7	9	61
	Old age	3	1	86
	After leaving the armed forces	0	0	*
	Other	1	2	52
Household where a person is pregnant, with no dependents		6	6	70
Household homeless in emergency (e.g. flooding)		1	1	70
Total households		5115	1563	69

* Due to rounding in aggregate returns, item cannot be calculated

Source: Welsh Government statistics

The removal of priority need status for prison leavers was accompanied by the introduction of the 'National Pathway for Homelessness Services to Children, Young People and Adults in the Secure Estate', a policy intended to improve resettlement planning prior to release. The policy states that a prisoner must receive housing assistance prior to release and they should receive the same treatment as anyone else who approaches a local authority for assistance, being treated with dignity and respect, however the fact remains that under the new legislation there is no longer a guarantee of temporary or settled accommodation.

Three key issues relating to prison leavers emerged from qualitative interviews. First, the new pathway policy had reportedly not yet been embedded and key actors in the process were unaware of their responsibilities. For example, one homeless prison leaver explained that they had been given inaccurate advice whilst in prison about entitlements to accommodation through the local authority. The second concern is that the typical forms of assistance being pursued to prevent and relieve homelessness, which focus on access to the PRS, are often unsuitable for prison leavers:

> None of the landlords want to take a prison leaver with no job and no money. Why would they? I'm high risk. Even the ones on the council's list that I contacted didn't want anything to do with me. (Homeless male prison leaver, aged 25-34, July 2016)

The final concern relates to the treatment of prison leavers by front-line homelessness staff. Some negative experiences were reported by prison leavers who claimed to be treated differently and less respectfully – a concern that Welsh Government seemingly pre-empted given requirements about equal and dignified treatment set out in the new pathway policy:

> To me I felt like I was looked down upon because I'd just come out of jail and my two children had to go and live with my parents. (Homeless female prison leaver, aged 35-44, July 2016)

Conclusions

This paper provides the first attempt to examine the implementation of pioneering Welsh homelessness prevention legislation, which sought to address the many deficiencies of existing prevention services in Wales, deficiencies that have also been documented across Europe and Anglosphere countries. In these conclusions we consider the extent to which the new legislation addresses these common challenges and in doing so we hope to inform developments both in Wales and in other national contexts.

The first key challenge is the widespread failure of national governments to effectively reorient spending and services away from temporary accommodation provision and towards prevention. Under the new Welsh approach, services have been comprehensively reoriented, with more than 7 000 households assisted before they became homeless (Stage 1) and in 65% of these cases homelessness was prevented. This, along with less successful efforts to relieve homelessness (Stage 2) with 6 891 households, has reduced temporary accommodation use by 18% and reduced the number of households who ultimately remain homeless at the end of the process (Stage 3) by 59%. Despite this marked success, there is scope for further improvement by increasing the number of early and timely referrals to homelessness prevention services, for instance through greater collaboration with prisons, social care services, health services, and both public and private landlords. For example, across Europe there are several countries where public and private landlords are required to notify authorities when rent payment problems arise (Amsterdam, Sweden).

The second challenge is to focus services on the needs of individuals, shifting away from uniform responses. This study finds that Welsh homelessness services have undergone a cultural shift, becoming more caring and supportive, however local authorities are conforming to a fairly typical set of limited actions to prevent and relieve homelessness. The legislation envisions a more innovative service tailored to the individual. Improving compliance with the intention of the legislation would

increase the individualisation of support, however a further development would be to place a duty on local authorities to accommodate households where prevention and relief efforts fail – essentially removing the priority need test at the final stage. This would drive improvements to prevent and relieve homelessness at earlier stages. We recognise the potential cost implications but it is worth noting that priority need has already been ended in Scotland (Anderson and Serpa, 2013; Fitzpatrick and Pawson, 2016).

The third challenge is service selectivity. The Welsh approach has delivered a significant improvement in the assistance offered to previously excluded groups, particularly single people, who now constitute 44% of all prevention cases and 68% of all relief cases. However, reforms have not brought about equality in service outcomes. Prevention assistance is less successful for single people, particularly prison leavers and those with no local connection. Steps could again be taken to ensure the legislation is implemented as intended, however outcomes for typically excluded groups might also be improved by enhancing their accommodation entitlements. Extending the right to emergency accommodation to all households (a right that exists in places such as Denmark, Germany, New York, and Scotland) might increase the likelihood of finding a solution for single people as they would no longer be roofless while steps are taken to relieve homelessness and the cost of temporary accommodation would provide a financial incentive for local authorities to act quickly. Also, we reiterate our conclusion that introducing a duty to accommodate households where prevention and relief efforts fail is likely to drive improvements in prevention and relief services.

The fourth challenge focuses on geographical variations in the availability of prevention services and it seems new Welsh legislation has failed to end the service lottery; experiences of homeless people continue to differ dependent on the local authority where they seek help. This conclusion raises questions about whether legislation alone can address this pressing concern. The final challenge is a lack of guaranteed access to homelessness prevention services. The Welsh legislation is pioneering in this regard as it provides the first case of national legislation which requires local authorities to help prevent and relieve homelessness for everyone who seeks assistance. However, this study has shown that whilst a legal right to assistance is an effective driver of change, without attention to implementation and the quality of services being offered, the legislation cannot realise its full potential impact. Busch-Geertsema *et al*. (2010) reached similar conclusions in their review of homelessness policies across Europe.

Related to the challenge of ensuring rights to access services, is the responsibility of people receiving them. This study raises two concerns about the new 'responsibilities' enshrined within the Welsh legislation. Firstly, it questions whether the

co-operation duty is being implemented unlawfully, with people who have unmet support needs and who lack full awareness of the consequences of a failure to cooperate. Secondly, it is important to develop a better understanding of the impacts on people's housing circumstances where assistance ends due to a failure to co-operate. If the impacts are highly detrimental, Welsh Government may question the desirability of prescribing such responsibilities. Furthermore, we learnt that effective prevention services tend to be highly persistent in their endeavours to make and retain contact with people facing homelessness (e.g. letters repeatedly sent to tenants and home visits offered in Austria). Perhaps the balance of rights and responsibilities currently weighs too heavily towards responsibilities in the implementation of the Welsh legislation.

Reflecting on the first year of pioneering Welsh homelessness prevention legislation in practice leads to four main lessons for policy makers in Wales, Europe and further afield. Firstly, placing a legal duty on local authorities to take steps to prevent and relieve homelessness is, in very broad terms, an effective tool for reorienting services towards prevention. As a result of this success we have already witnessed the Westminster Government in England replicating the Welsh legislation[15] and it has potential to be replicated beyond the UK. Secondly, placing rights alongside responsibilities is a fair principle, however its implementation in Wales raises some concerns about potential impacts on vulnerable individuals, hence policymakers must give careful consideration to such policies. Thirdly, legislation alone is insufficient. In Wales there has been a lack of attention to implementation, particularly in relation to the quality and consistency of services being delivered and their compliance with the intentions of the law. Effective monitoring, regulation and resourcing of services is essential. Finally, experiences in Wales suggest that a duty to accommodate households is likely to be an effective driver of homelessness prevention and relief services. If local authorities must provide emergency accommodation for roofless households and they must provide settled accommodation where prevention and relief efforts fail, it is likely that greater innovation and service development will ensue at an earlier stage. Welsh developments clearly offer learning for other European and Anglosphere nations but, as these conclusions highlight, there is also significant opportunity for further improvement in Wales, informed by effective practices elsewhere.

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15 The Homelessness Reduction Bill was passing through parliament at the time of writing.

Acknowledgements

There is currently great interest in Welsh homelessness policy and this is inevitably placing significant demands on local authority and third sector staff to take part in interviews and discussions, to provide data, to attend events and often to help in the recruitment of homeless people for interviews. Therefore, we are particularly grateful for the support of the service managers who assisted this research. We are also very grateful to the homeless people who freely gave their time to discuss their experiences and their views on Welsh homelessness services. The authors also acknowledge the constructive contributions of the anonymous reviewers.

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Moving Evidence Into Policy: The Story of the At Home/Chez Soi Initiative's Impact on Federal Homelessness Policy in Canada and its Implications for the Spread of Housing First in Europe and Internationally

Eric Macnaughton, Geoffrey Nelson, Paula Goering, and Myra Piat

Wilfrid Laurier University, Vancouver BC, Canada
Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo ON, Canada
Toronto, ON, Canada
Douglas Mental Health University Institute, McGill University, QC, Canada

Abstract_ *The purpose of this study was to understand the sustainability of the At Home/Chez Soi (AHCS) project with respect to its wider impact on homelessness policy in Canada and internationally. Using a qualitative case study approach with 15 key informant interviews (with project leaders and decision-makers) and archival data, we examined the strategies adopted to achieve sustainability of the Housing First (HF) programs implemented during this demonstration project. In particular, we focused on the impacts that these strategies had on national policy. Four main themes emerged: (1) the importance of evidence that was both rigorous and contextually relevant; (2) the value of framing the evidence in a way to achieve maximum impact in the decision-making context; (3) the importance of strong researcher-decision-maker relationships, which evolved through an integrated knowledge translation approach; and (4) the value of resources and expertise provided by key stakeholders. A subsidiary theme was the importance of timing. The change in federal policy was that as of 2015, the 10 largest Canadian communities were to allocate 65% of their federal funding to HF programs for chronically and episodically homeless persons, and the remaining 41 communities and Aboriginal communities were to allocate 40% of their funding to HF programs.*

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We discuss the theoretical and practical implications of what we learned about how evidence makes its way into policy and the implications of these findings for the expansion/extension of HF in Europe and internationally.

Keywords_ *Housing First Canada, integrated knowledge translation, sustainability*

Introduction

The At Home/Chez Soi (AHCS) project was the largest mental health services trial ever conducted in Canada. Conceived as a response to a national concern about homelessness in the run-up to Vancouver's 2010 Winter Olympic Games, the project implemented the Housing First (HF) model in five cities. Funded by Health Canada, and carried out by the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC), the project used a randomized controlled trial (RCT) design, following more than 2200 previously homeless individuals in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, and Moncton for two years.

Housing First (HF) is an innovative, evidence-based, and principle-based (e.g., consumer choice, recovery) approach to ending chronic homelessness that utilizes rent supplements to access scattered-site market housing (usually private apartments) and recovery-oriented, clinical services that are separate from participants' housing (Aubry *et al.*, 2015). The AHCS research found that after one and two years, HF participants showed significantly more positive outcomes than Treatment as Usual (TAU) participants on measures of housing stability, quality of life, and community functioning.

Despite the positive findings emerging from the project, AHCS faced the challenge of sustaining its services beyond the research phase and influencing homelessness policy more broadly. While the project leaders had anticipated this challenge from the beginning, the need to bring sustainability to the fore became more urgent as the study approached its completion date. In this article, we focus on how the strategy for securing transitional funding for the sites influenced broader federal homelessness policy.

Internationally, demonstration projects, including those using RCTs have been increasingly adopted as a strategy for establishing and spreading successful interventions (Deeming, 2013). At the same time, such initiatives, even when successful, are vulnerable to not being sustained once the pilot phase is over. Because of

concerns about sustainability, AHCS adopted a specific strategy based on a collaborative research and knowledge translation process. The current study is valuable given that the successful results of that strategy present an example of a pilot project that effectively influenced policy. This article looks at the story behind those efforts, as well as seeks, through the lens of policy streams theory (Kingdon, 2005) to advance conceptual understanding of how knowledge makes its way into policy and practice. This study builds on a previous study which also demonstrated the utility of policy streams theory in understanding the success achieved in the conception phase of the project in advancing HF in Canada as an idea worthy of concerted study (Macnaughton *et al.*, 2013). The current study builds on that work, and helps demonstrate the relevance of policy streams theory in sustaining and spreading the AHCS demonstration project beyond the pilot phase.

Literature Review

Unfortunately, many effective demonstration projects in health and human services are not sustained, much less expanded into practice in community settings beyond the demonstration sites. Wandersman *et al.* (2008) have termed this problem the "research-practice" gap. This gap has led to the development of knowledge translation (KT) approaches. Traditional approaches to KT have emphasized top-down, "push" processes that pay little attention to the community context that surrounds and inevitably impacts the implementation of evidence-based programs (Jacobson *et al.,* 2003; Wandersman *et al.*, 2016). The limitations of "push" approaches to KT have prompted researchers to better understand the context of knowledge users and the importance of the relationship between researchers and knowledge users (Jacobson *et al.*, 2003). This recognition of the importance of user context has led to the development of more interactive approaches known as integrated knowledge translation (IKT) (Bullock *et al.*, 2010).

Central to IKT is the relationship between researchers and knowledge users. The knowledge users in IKT can include policy-makers, planners, and practitioners. With regard to policy-makers, Bogenschneider and Corbett (2010) state that it is important to break through stereotypes that researchers and policy-makers may hold of one another. Moreover, they assert that researchers need to have a better understanding of the policy-making process and context and the needs of policy-makers for research. Bogenschneider and Corbett (2010) also underscore the importance of having an ongoing relationship with policy-makers and a long-term commitment to making policy change. Finally, they argue for an educational approach over an advocacy approach in working with policy-makers, observing that policy-makers appreciate having trusted researchers on whom they can call for evidence and advice.

In the policy arena, the role of the researcher goes beyond providing research evidence and technical expertise to one of consulting about policy alternatives and solutions to problems (Goering and Wasylenki, 1993; Jacobson *et al.*, 2005). In essence, researchers become what has been called policy "operatives" (Hilgartner and Bosk, 1988) or policy "entrepreneurs" (Kingdon, 2005; Mintrom and Norman, 2009). A policy operative or entrepreneur is well-positioned to advance policy solutions in an environment in which multiple problems and solutions compete for policy attention (Hilgartner and Bosk, 1988). Similarly, within government, individuals can be positioned to be "policy brokers," or intermediaries who can also play a policy entrepreneur function (Lomas, 2007).

Kingdon (2005) has argued that policy entrepreneurs recognize and are able to take advantage of windows of opportunity for change, when three different "streams" converge – problems, politics, and policy options. An important dimension of making change is how problems and solutions are "framed" (Benford and Snow, 2000; Fischer, 2003; Humphreys and Rappaport, 1993). Policy entrepreneurs are able to frame problems and solutions in a way that aligns multiple political stakeholders – government insiders and community members and organizations that have a stake in the issue – on a policy option. Policy entrepreneurs recognize that while research evidence is important, it is only one component of the policy change process. Discursive policy analysis (Fischer, 2003) that uses the metaphor of a drama (Hilgartner and Bosk, 1988; Greenhalgh and Russell, 2005) provides a contextualized view of how evidence can be translated into policy.

In the policy arena, IKT can be used towards different ends. One goal of IKT is to promote the sustainability or continuance of evidence-based programs beyond a research demonstration period (Scheirer and Dearing, 2011; Savaya and Spiro, 2012; Stirman *et al*., 2012; Schell *et al*., 2013). Another goal of IKT is to scale out or scale up an evidence-based program to other settings (Westley *et al*., 2014). Scaling out refers to expanding a program to other settings, while scaling up is concerned with broader systems change. In the case of HF, scaling out involves the creation of new HF programs, while scaling up refers to policy change that transforms housing and services to a HF approach (Nelson, 2013; Goering and Tsemberis, 2014).

With regard to housing and mental health, there has been little research on the impacts of IKT on program sustainability or policy change. In the context of HF in the United States, Stanhope and Dunn's (2011) case study suggests that evidence alone is insufficient to explain the G.W. Bush administration's adoption of HF as a policy to address chronic homelessness. They noted the limitations of evidence-based policy analysis and argued that the discursive approach to policy described above provides a more robust theoretical approach for understanding policy

change. Steadman *et al.* (2002) examined the sustainability of the Access to Community Care and Effective Services and Supports (ACCESS) five-year U.S. homelessness demonstration program. Several ACCESS sites were either successful in obtaining federal, state, or local funding after the demonstration phase. Factors that enabled sites to obtain funding were: (1) the research evidence gathered during the demonstration phase, (2) a favourable political environment, and (3) having ACCESS "champions" who supported the program.

In summary, IKT has been used to bridge the "research-practice" gap, and has promise as a strategy for moving research into policy. Together with decision-maker champions, researchers who are skilled navigators in the policy arena are not only able to marshal evidence for policy options, but they are able to take advantage of windows for policy change through problem and solution framing and creating a coalition of insiders and outsiders who can promote policy change.

Methodology

The overall purpose of this research is to tell the story behind this large-scale RCT. The two main research questions are:

1. What is the chronology of the AHCS's national-level efforts to sustain the project for a transitional period and impact social policy?
2. What are the key themes pertaining to how the study's findings came to influence ongoing federal policy?

Data collection

Given the complexity of the knowledge exchange process related to moving evidence into policy, we adopted a case study approach, which has been recommended as the best way to understand this complexity (Greenhalgh and Fahy, 2015). The approach relies primarily on data from 15 semi-structured key informant interviews with individuals from the political and policy spheres who were involved in the project, as well as AHCS project leaders at both the national and provincial levels. Participants were identified and contacted by members of the research team and were provided with an information letter and consent form. Eleven interviews were conducted by phone and four were conducted in person. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. The interviews were conducted between January and July 2015, using a semi-structured interview guide. The interviews were complemented by supplementary archival research from the period in question, including media articles, correspondence, meeting notes, and policy documents. This research was approved by the Research Ethics Board of Wilfrid Laurier University.

Data analysis

The first objective of the analysis was to synthesize the 15 key informant interviews and secondary data to produce a narrative account of the national-level sustainability story, including a description of the change, as well as the key events or turning points leading up to the change. The other objective was to identify cross-cutting themes and processes that thread their way through those themes. The approach involved constant comparative analysis as practiced in grounded theory (Charmaz, 2002) and other analytic approaches (Braun and Clarke, 2006), and entails: open or initial coding, which involves identifying and giving provisional labels (codes) to apparently similar portions of data that re-occur; and/or which appear to be emerging as significant issues or themes; focused (or thematic) coding, which involves developing more firm categories; and theoretical coding, identifying how various themes inter-relate.

The steps for ensuring the quality of the data and the rigour of the analysis included: double-checking transcriptions; memo-writing to reflect on individual coding decisions and hunches; use of a team approach for making and validating coding decisions; and member-checking (returning data analysis to participants to ensure trustworthiness of the analysis).

Findings

In the next section, we present findings related to the first research question, which was to understand the story of the project's sustainability from the national perspective.

Chronology: after the demonstration project: the story of sustainability and policy impact

The AHCS project began in March, 2009. With federal funding from Health Canada, MHCC hired a National Leadership Team and Site Operations Teams that would guide implementation in five communities that reflected the linguistic and cultural diversity of the country. From the outset of the project, there had always been a concern regarding sustainability of the project past its end in March 2013. There was also motivation to see the approach become integrated into policy, both provincially and federally. For the past 10 years, the federal government's relatively small but still significant role in homelessness policy was carried out through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS), which provides direct funding to 61 urban Canadian communities, as well as Aboriginal and rural/remote communities across Canada to help them address homelessness.

At the time of the AHCS project, HPS was under review, as the program requires periodic renewal. Formed in 1999 when homelessness was emerging as a national concern, the federal government created a "grants and contributions" program, known originally as the National Homelessness Initiative. During the period leading up to the program's potential renewal date (April, 2014), concerns were expressed about the program's effectiveness.

The existing HPS policy framework alluded to the HF approach, and there was interest within the federal government in advancing this approach. However, much of the existing evidence in support of the HF approach came largely from the United States, and it was unclear whether the model could be implemented in various Canadian contexts, although versions of the model existed in pockets. Additionally, it was understood that the Conservative government of the day was focused on reducing the "footprint" of government, and predisposed to devolving responsibilities perceived to belong to other levels of government. Despite the federal government's long involvement in housing, this issue is technically under provincial jurisdiction.

In the beginning phases of the initiative, project leaders had always emphasized the need to "think about sustainability from Day 1". An integral part of the strategy was to adopt an IKT approach, which entailed engaging policy decision-makers in the research process, including setting up a National Working Group and Site Advisory Groups. The working assumption was that engagement would increase the relevance of the research to decision-maker concerns, and thereby increase the chances that they would eventually "buy in" to the results. It was unclear, however, what level of government would ultimately be responsible for sustaining the programs.

Given the complexities of implementation, and the need to focus on the research, it was difficult to maintain an active focus on sustainability, and on the bigger picture of what sustainability could mean, including expansion of the approach more broadly, and its impact on policy. However, around the time the interim results of the project were being compiled (2011), the concern about sustainability did come back to the "front burner," and the project leaders developed a task force to strategize. Within the complex homelessness policy arena, which involved federal, provincial and local players, it was evident that the "ask," or the request for funding and policy change, had to be directed to all these levels.

In the summer of 2011, there was a deep sense of urgency when it became clear that the federal government would not reconsider their agreement to fund this demonstration after March, 2013. While the "ask" had once been considered in broad terms, with the impending end of the project, the project leaders focused on the more immediate concern of securing funding for a transitional period beyond the project's formal end date. This would enable the analysis of the final results, as well as maintain the housing and support services for participants beyond this period.

With a growing awareness of the urgency of the need, the project leaders recognized the importance of influencing senior political leaders at various levels of government. The strategy that emerged thus blended IKT with a "full court press" effort to engage decision-makers from the bureaucratic and political spheres. Based on the interim findings, the project leaders and the MHCC Government Relations team conducted an effort described by one individual as a "relentless effort." Developing an oral presentation with slides, they conducted a series of meetings, "briefing up and down," with federal and provincial decision-makers.

While this was happening, they also received advice from decision-maker partners about how to frame their presentation. A key piece of advice was to frame their request in the context of "improving the efficiency of an existing government program." At the same time, key officials from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), the Ministry responsible for the HPS program, including the Minister herself and leading bureaucrats, became impressed with the AHCS project's emerging findings and considered the option of "repurposing" the program in line with HF principles. In order to "sell" this option, one official in particular, "pushed really hard [for AHCS researchers] to quantify the results" in terms of return on investment.

However, in the summer of 2012, with less than one year left in the project, project leaders had still not received an answer to their request. At this time, Michael Kirby, an influential former federal government Senator, and also the outgoing board chair of the MHCC became increasingly re-involved in the project. Kirby played a key role in the original conception of the project. As a result of meetings he convened, a senior official from one province proposed a cost-sharing agreement for transitional funding between the provinces and federal government. Kirby was also able to present the results to senior officials in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), who were impressed by the data concerning "the efficiency of the results, compared to other alternative approaches" for addressing homelessness. The PMO then connected with the officials in HRSDC, and learned of their support for HF.

In October, 2012, one AHCS leader "learned confidentially" that an agreement in principle had been reached between four of the five AHCS provinces and the federal government. Finally, in March, 2013, a few days before the federal budget became public, Louise Bradley, CEO of MHCC, received a phone call, informing her that there would be support for a five-year extension of the HPS program, which would be repurposed and focused on HF.

Key informants shared their perspective about why the change in policy happened. Said one: "there was good evidence at the right time that allowed the government to say or to feel that there was an important federal leadership role to continue in homelessness based on evidence". This participant explained that the timing was

right given that a decision had to be made about the HPS program's continuation. The evidence presented in support of transitional funding (i.e. the AHCS interim findings) occurred at the time the consideration of the wider policy decision was happening. Prior to the push for transitional funding, earlier project results had also informed thinking within HRSDC in a gradual iterative process where "all the right people" were involved. As one individual said: "all the stars aligned".

Key themes in how evidence was translated into policy

In this section, we discuss underlying themes relating to the second research question, which was how the strategy adopted by the project enabled the evidence from AHCS to influence policy.

Key informants repeatedly emphasized four themes: (1) the importance of the evidence, (2) the framing of that evidence, (3) the importance of the relationships between researchers, decision-makers, and their intermediaries; and 4) the importance of resources and expertise provided by key stakeholders and partners. A subsidiary theme common throughout the main themes was the importance of timing.

The evidence

Many participants emphasized the importance of the results themselves. Said one key informant with broad governmental experience: "the thing you've got to remember in all of this, is that it only worked because the research was so good". This individual was careful to point out that evidence alone was not sufficient, emphasizing that it is "… not always true that great research gets implemented". The serendipitous timing of that evidence was also important, given that it allowed the results to quickly inform the policy decision surrounding what would happen to the HPS program beyond April, 2014.

Other stakeholders emphasized that it was not only the evidence's rigour, but also its relevance to the Canadian context. Said one government stakeholder from the Department responsible for homelessness policy:

> I think At Home was really able to solidify in many people's minds, particularly in the political sense, how Housing First could work in communities big and small with different populations, Aboriginal, [and non-Aboriginal],… [that] it could work across the country with different models. So I think demonstrating success [in that sense] was really important.

Additionally, key informants noted that the study was part of a larger body of evidence that was accumulating elsewhere in Canada, as well as internationally.

Framing the evidence

Many of the key informants emphasized that it wasn't just the evidence, but the way it was framed and communicated to decision-makers. One said: "you know the way in which it was presented was as critical as the findings themselves. And, so that was really important." An issue in particular was the significance of the economic findings in the particular political context. Said one of the lead researchers: "… it was that $20 savings for a $10 investment that people wanted to hear and repeatedly used for their conversations. We saw it in the press. We saw in the news release. We saw it everywhere". Another government stakeholder said:

> It's a simpler argument for someone to make than them trying to explain why choice is important or why harm reduction is part of the model. So if you're from a political perspective it was just an easier sell I would say.

As mentioned earlier, it was also important that the request to government was framed not as a request for more money, but in terms of an "opportunity to reform the efficiency of an existing government program".

Despite this messaging, another government key informant explained that the caveats or "nuances" placed on the economic findings were also important to the credibility of the findings. Other key informants emphasized that the idea that economic findings themselves made all the difference was oversold. Equally important, an AHCS project leader said, was the hopefulness behind the approach: "It provided a piece of a solution to what was going to possibly be a program that was going to end".

The importance of researcher/decision-maker/intermediary relationships

Many key informants placed importance on the value of ongoing engagement between researchers and decision-makers. The extent of that engagement, which was described as "relentless" and a "full court press," led to a critical mass of individuals becoming involved. This included the "rank and file," as well as "very senior" political decision-makers. As one individual, an AHCS leader who was involved in the communications strategy, stated:

> We did a pretty broad and deep set of briefings with political staff, with senior bureaucrats and elected officials not only federally but also provincially. I think, you know, they talked to each other. I think there was a bit of a groundswell.

Another factor mentioned was the quality of the researcher/decision-maker relationships, and how trusting relationships enabled the project to stay on track. As one government official said of this dialogue:

> I think that's absolutely critical… It was critical for the conversations in the middle [of the project] to make sure that everyone aligned and stayed aligned, and maybe in some cases realigned to produce what I think people on the government side felt was needed to understand and, you know, have it affect policy… That's where I mean again, we're coming back to that same thing of having the research team and the decision-makers kind of arm in arm earlier on and understanding and good communication between the two. I think that's how you get it solved.

Finally, having strong researcher/decision-maker relationships enabled AHCS to gain crucial advice about how to frame their findings. A number of key individuals within government played key intermediary roles in this regard, helping the MHCC understand the importance of framing the "ask" in terms of cost-effectiveness, and in terms of opportune timing to reform an existing government program.

The resources and expertise of key stakeholders

In terms of stakeholders who contributed to sustainability, key informants spoke about the role of the MHCC and other aligned advocacy organizations. First, they noted the role of MHCC in convening the research, and in carrying out a project in a way that government itself could not have accomplished. They also mentioned the unique positioning of the organization, which enabled its results to be effectively disseminated, as its structure provided a "a receptor site, [or] a mechanism for making people aware of findings that much research naturally wouldn't have had". As another key informant, an MHCC leader explained, the Commission was positioned outside of government and strategically within the federal/provincial context.

> By creating a national Mental Health Commission, at arm's length from the federal government, this unique and unprecedented body was able to dance outside the constitutional framework of health… (and) wasn't log-jammed the way the federal government would be if it tried to establish clinical services and housing interventions in five provinces where health care is very much under provincial jurisdiction.

Finally, key informants mentioned the resources brought to bear to the project that enabled the findings to be "amplified", as well as the MHCC's Government Relations expertise that helped the results to be framed effectively.

Research participants also mentioned the supportive role of the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) and other organizations, such as the Homeless Hub, in helping to convey a consistent message about the value of HF. As one individual from the homelessness community said: "I mean the AHCS project obviously I would say is the key thing. I think also the Canadian Alliance was something important in that. I think that coalesced with some leading national voices saying

this is the direction to go in". CAEH in particular was mentioned as an organization with unique access to the government of the time. One individual from the homelessness advocacy community noted that CAEH was able to support AHCS's message, but also provided some "political translation that helped [the government] get comfortable with it". For example, the CAEH was able to bring to bear the successful experience of HF in Alberta, and of the approaches' implementation under conservative administrations in the United States.

The outcome: Change in federal homelessness policy

A total of $600 million was allocated to HPS from 2014 to 2019. The largest 10 Canadian communities, which received 80% of the community funding from HPS, were required to invest a minimum of 65% of their funding in HF starting April 1, 2015. All other funded communities with allocations of greater than $200K, including Aboriginal communities, were required to allocate a minimum of 40% of their funding to HF starting April 1, 2016. Moreover, the target population for HPS funding was mandated to be people who are chronically or episodically homeless.

Discussion

Theoretical implications

Policy streams theory (Kingdon, 2005) understands policy change as the convergence of problems, politics, and policy ideas. It posits a key role for timing, and the ability of individuals or organizations to take advantage of policy windows that arise to bring together a convergence of the three elements. In the present case, the "problem" was what to do about the AHCS participants with the impending end of the project, given that no assurances had been made about continued funding. As it turned out, the government had its own challenge, which was what to do about the impending "sunset" of the HPS program, and whether to cut or devolve it in the face of favourable evidence that the federally-funded AHCS study was producing.

Because of the efforts of multiple partners, the policy idea or proposal that came to the fore was to not only provide the AHCS study with transitional funding, but to repurpose the HPS program with a focus on HF. In order for this policy idea to go forward, the timing had to be right. As the HPS review happened, the evidence in support of the transitional funding was presented while the broader policy direction was already being considered. Also, the political context had to be favourable. In the present case, this meant that key allies had to be brought on side, such as the Minister of Finance, and senior decision-makers within the Prime Minister's Office. This depended on being able to access these insiders and frame the policy idea in

a way that resonated within the current political context. Hence, there was a focus on the cost-effectiveness of AHCS and using this evidence to improve the efficiency of an existing program, rather than "expand the footprint of government," which as one key informant emphasized, was anathema to the then-current Conservative ruling party.

In the evidence-based healthcare movement, the importance of evidence in and of itself is noted, as well as the necessity of marshaling data considered to be rigorous within an accepted hierarchy of evidence (Fafard, 2015). Much emphasis is placed on the notion of seemingly irrational "gaps" between what the evidence says and what policy and practice actually occurs. The results of our study, while affirming the importance of rigorous evidence, are consistent with the more recent turn within health policy research towards discursive policy analysis (Fischer, 2003; Fafard, 2015). Furthermore, our research suggests that rather than being viewed as incommensurate epistemological frameworks, evidence-based policy and discursive policy analysis are complementary (Nelson, 2013). Evidence based on rigorous research about "what works" is important, but so too is discursive policy analysis of the framing, context, stakeholder involvement, and timing of policy options.

Drawn from political science and policy studies, the discursive approach pays attention to the role of narrative in decision-making, or to the importance of understanding how evidence is presented or framed (Koon *et al.*, 2016) in a persuasive manner within a given political context. Moreover, discursive analysis suggests that decision-making is not a strictly rational endeavor, but is more accurately understood within the purview of rhetoric (Greenhalgh and Russell, 2005). It suggests, and our results affirm, that for evidence to be most impactful, it should be framed as a plausible policy idea for solving a salient problem, in a way that is convincing enough to mobilize a broad coalition to support it. In this light, the success of the IKT approach adopted by the AHCS leaders related to the researcher/decision-maker partnerships that developed, as it was these relationships that enabled the research to be framed in a way that mobilized a coalition of stakeholders both within and outside of government. Also important were the resources and expertise of the host agency and other key partners, that enabled the research team to carry out its communications strategy, which was both broad and deep.

It should be noted that in AHCS, evidence played a more prominent role in the sustainability phase as compared to the conception or adoption phase, where success was driven significantly by the entrepreneurial skills of certain key individuals in advancing AHCS as a promising idea to be tested in the Canadian context (Macnaughton *et al.*, 2013). In the sustainability phase, rhetorical prowess was again important, but went hand in hand with the evidence itself. In both cases, however,

the role of timing was crucial, where persuasive arguments were marshaled in the face of opening policy windows (Kingdon, 2005): at the project's inception, the 2010 Winter Olympics, and at its end, an upcoming decision-point about whether to renew the federal homelessness funding stream.

Practical implications

There were certain practical implications and lessons learned in the course of this research demonstration project. Below, we talk about what worked well, and what worked less well.

In terms of what worked well, most key informants pointed to the importance of having early findings to be able to share with decision-makers. They believed that it was also important that these findings be communicated honestly and with "nuance," so that the limitations as well as strengths were clear. Doing so actually heightened the credibility of the results. The importance of a collaborative, coalition-building approach also became evident. Having strong research/decision-maker relationships allowed both parties to align expectations around sustainability when challenges or misunderstandings arose about defining who was responsible for what. One key informant mentioned how the "generosity of spirit" of the project leaders created a climate that allowed other community-based organizations to align with AHCS, and which enabled a consistent message to come forward to government. Another key informant mentioned the importance of leaders having the skills to "hold a space," so that individuals from different perspectives could work together rather than pursue separate directions.

There were some aspects of the project that worked less well. While project leaders talked about prioritizing sustainability from the project's beginning, they acknowledged the difficulty of keeping the issue on the "front-burner," and defining clear expectations from the beginning, as well as underestimating the resources and time that the sustainability strategy would ultimately entail. While the project was fortunate in drawing on the organizational expertise of the MHCC, it took time to develop a cohesive message, and the sheer scope of the communication campaign was well beyond the initial expectations of any of the project leaders. A number of key informants also pointed to an intrinsic difficulty of mounting demonstration projects in producing evidence to convince decision-makers, given that those decision-makers often require information more quickly than researchers are accustomed to providing. In this case, the researchers had to overcome their trepidation about presenting findings that had not undergone peer review.

Implications for spreading the housing first model internationally

The question arises about the sustainability and spread of the Housing First model in Europe, and what role research is playing in its wider dissemination internationally. Conceived in New York City, HF is now indeed having far reaching application beyond North America (Padgett *et al*., 2016). Europe, which just hosted the second International HF conference in Ireland in 2016, has seen HF grow by leaps and bounds in a short period of time, and seen a number of pilot projects being implemented and studied. Between 2011 and 2013 the Housing First Europe (HFE) initiative implemented and evaluated programs in five centres (Helsinki, Amsterdam, Budapest, Glasgow, and Dublin) (Busch-Geertsema, 2014). France has just completed a four-city RCT of HF based on AHCS (Tinland *et al*., 2013); a three-city RCT of HF is being conducted in Spain (Bernad *et al*., 2016); Portugal is researching and expanding HF (Ornelas *et al*., 2014); Italy has developed a network of HF programs (Console *et al*., 2016); based on the pilot, the HF model is being expanded in Ireland (O'Sullivan, 2016); and a multi-national HF fidelity study is underway. Also, in Australia, rigorous research on HF programs is being conducted (Whittaker *et al*., 2015).

A significant influence on the initial adoption of HF in North America was the leadership of certain key individuals, including Philip Mangano, Sam Tsemberis, and Michael Kirby, all of whom led through their policy entrepreneurship skills, in other words their ability to persuade decision-makers to take a chance on a promising idea to end chronic homelessness (Stanhope and Dunn, 2011). As the evidence around the model accumulated, it began to be implemented more widely. Eventually, HF was recognized in the U.S. as an evidence-based practice, and in Canada as official federal homelessness policy.

The adoption of HF internationally has been influenced by research conducted in the US and Canada and IKT activities provided by the model's founder, Dr. Sam Tsemberis, as well as local champions in various countries (Greenwood *et al*., 2013). The results of the current study suggest that moving beyond the adoption phase and sustaining and growing the model will depend not only on the research results coming out of the pilot phase, but will also hinge on the strategies adopted for communicating this emerging evidence to policy makers in a convincing way.

In the case of AHCS, one convincing aspect of the strategy was the rigour of the experimental design used to generate the evidence. Both developed and developing countries have used RCT's as a strategy to implement and spread innovative ideas; this strategy also holds promise for expediting the move towards implementation in jurisdictions where there is interest, but significant progress has not moved far beyond "rhetorical nods" (O'Sullivan, 2016) towards the HF policy. While

acknowledging the limitations of demonstration programs that fail to be sustained, Shinn (2016) highlights the role of rigorous experimental evidence in spreading HF throughout North America.

This suggests that in the European context, those jurisdictions that are studying HF using an RCT design (e.g. France, Spain) (Tinland *et al*., 2013; Bernad *et al.*, 2016) may have an advantage when it comes to sustaining and spreading these interventions, should they prove successful. Nonetheless, our study results, and those of the conception study, suggest that methodological rigour, while certainly important, is not the sole factor that determines whether evidence about what works moves into policy and practice more widely.

Indeed, when it came to the persuasiveness of evidence, what the key informants noted as much as its rigour was its contextual relevance. In other words, despite initial skepticism about whether an American model could work, they found affirmation that the model could work across several Canadian cities with varied demographic and service system profiles. They also saw evidence that the model could be flexibly adapted to these various contexts and still be effective. This was in keeping with the premise tested by the study's designers that the basic principles (as opposed to the specific operational details) of the intervention could be implemented with fidelity to model, and that the intervention could be effective with a wider group of homelessness individuals than had been served by the Pathways HF model, employing a wider range of support (i.e. both ACT and ICM) (Goering *et al*., 2011).

Similarly, in Europe, against the hope held for the model's promise, there has been some skepticism about whether HF would work in a continent with significant differences in demographics and social welfare systems (that differ with North America, and also vary within EU's constituent countries) (Pleace and Bretherton, 2013). Thus, there have been some questions raised regarding the jurisdictions mounting the various pilot projects about who is being served, what exactly is being implemented, and whether it would meet Housing First fidelity standards expressed in terms of the Pathways model's operational details (Greenwood *et al.,* 2013).

For instance, in France, the D'Abord study directly parallels At Home/Chez Soi's focus on people with mental disorder, with the ACT/ICM support targeting mental health and addictions-related needs (Tinland *et al.*, 2013). By contrast, in Glasgow, the focus is more squarely on addictions (Busch-Geertsema, 2012). Regardless of context, however, chronically homeless individuals typically experience complex concurrent needs. Arguably, whether addictions are more prominent than mental illness in certain European HF participants, many would also have undiagnosed mental health issues, and thus the populations would have considerable overlap

(Aubry, 2014). Though the AHCS intervention was framed in terms of mental health, the five sites typically included individuals who fell outside traditional mental health system criteria, including those with prominent addictions (Goering *et al.,* 2011).

As for differences in implementation context of the surrounding service system, arguments about fidelity of complex interventions now emphasize attention to addressing common underlying principles, rather than operational specifics (Hawe *et al.,* 2004; Pleace and Bretherton, 2013; Busch-Geertsema, 2014). Initial evidence suggests that despite some differences, and implementation failures, for the most part, the pioneering European HF programs *are* implementing the essential ingredients of the model (Greenwood *et al.,* 2013), and achieving an apparently impressive degree of housing stability for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness with complex support needs (Busch-Geertsema, 2014).

In summary, our study suggests that strategies for converting emerging European research results (and subsequent findings) into longer-term sustainability would benefit from drawing on the experimental rigour of the studies used to generate them. We recognize, however, that in contrast to the HF European evaluation (Busch-Geertsema, 2014), AHCS was able to leverage considerable resources to conduct a rigorous RCT. We found nonetheless, that in mounting a knowledge exchange strategy, the emphasis on the contextual relevance of the results was crucial. Of similar importance was timing, being able to communicate results as policy windows opened, framed in terms that resonated within the policy-making context (e.g. cost-effectiveness, "ending vs. managing" homelessness, etc.). Again, experimental rigour in the form of an RCT, though important, is not the sole factor that explained adoption or sustainability of HF.

Our results suggest further that the role of evidence may be different depending on the stage of implementation. In the adoption phase, when making the case to implement a pilot project in a new context, HF champions may cite the promise of the HF model, but acknowledge the need to show success in this new context. In the sustainability phase, actually producing such evidence is necessary to make a persuasive case to maintain and spread the model. As the research results accumulate in the European context, or elsewhere beyond North America, researchers need to keep these things in mind when seeking to sustain and grow effective HF programs.

Conclusion

This case study has shown how evidence has influenced policy in one country in the domain of homelessness, and drawn out the implications for other jurisdictions, including the European Union. The findings show that evidence alone is insufficient, but that evidence framing is crucial. Furthermore, in order to understand the decision-making context and make persuasive arguments for policy change, strong relationships must be developed with policy-makers from the outset. Implementation teams must also have the resources and expertise to communicate their messages effectively, and be able to strategize about sustainability from the beginning of the demonstration project. Given the challenges of timing demonstration projects, project leaders must also be ready to marshal interim findings and focus on communicating them while the research is still in progress. The emphasis on decision-making in the literature suggests a rational process where certain individuals deliberate on available evidence. Rather than focusing on the decisions of individuals, our study emphasizes the need to be sensitive to opening policy windows, and frame results in a way that build consensus amongst various groups of stakeholders, for this is what influences the decisions of those key policy decision-makers.

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Migration, Transit and the Informal: Homeless West-African Migrants in Copenhagen

Kristine Juul

Institute for People and Technology, University of Roskilde, Denmark

Abstract_ *In the last couple of years, Copenhagen has been receiving new types of visitors: strong, resourceful men from southern Europe in search of job opportunities. Many are of West African origin, and have lived for many years in Spain and Italy. As a result of the economic recession, they are now moving northwards. Being Schengen residents, their entry is legal, but obtaining a work permit remains almost impossible. Instead, a wide range of geographical areas are being considered as alternative places to make a living. Therefore, these men lapse into the position of modern 'hunter-gatherers' surviving through a mix of private charity, bottle and recycling collection, informal odd jobs, etc, while moving between the Nordic capitals as opportunities for income generation arise. The emergence of such a hyper mobile and flexible proletariat challenges many of our perceptions of migration. Also, our conceptions of integration, citizenship, minimum wages and living standards may need reconsideration, just as the self-image of private charities may need to adjust to a new group of beneficiaries, who are usually transient. This paper investigates the motivations of these new migrants, their survival strategies, and the strategies put forward to avoid the potential downward spiral of surviving as a homeless migrant in Copenhagen.*

Keywords_ *Homelessness, West African Migrants, remigration, informality*

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Introduction

Thomas is hanging out in the People's Park in downtown Copenhagen, right next door to the private homeless shelter run by a religious charity. He is around 45 years old, strong, tall and reasonably well dressed, as are the rest of the group of slightly younger Ghanaian and Nigerian guys. In spite of his neat appearance, Thomas has been on the move for a long time. Since he left Ghana as a young man, he has lived for 13 years in Madrid and five years in Libya, including a short stay in Tunisia. He has professional experience as a construction worker, which took him as far as Malaysia. There, he spent a year constructing an airport as a contract worker for a Ghanaian sub-contractor. It is, however, a long time since he has been able to find a decent job, which is why he has come to Denmark to see if luck will strike while he is here. At the moment, he is looking forward to the Roskilde Festival, a huge annual eight-day music event hosting 130 000 people at a site 30 km from Copenhagen. From his more experienced colleagues, he understands that it is possible to earn a decent daily wage by collecting recyclable cans and bottles at this venue. In the meantime, he joins a larger crew of can-collectors cruising between the many public open-air events and festivals organized throughout spring and summer months, hunting refunds from bottles and cans left by the beer-drinking participants. Thomas isn't quite sure of his plans for the coming period; he might travel to other cities in Scandinavia to try his luck on the job market. In September, he plans to return to Spain to participate in the Festival del Vino in Madrid. Due to his current economic situation, he has sent his wife and two kids back to Ghana, but he usually manages to visit them once a year.

Thomas is part of a new group of visitors to Copenhagen that has increased noticeably during the last couple of years: strong, healthy and resourceful men in search of job opportunities. A good number of these migrants have roots in West African countries; others arrive from the Eastern European EU countries. Many migrants tell stories similar to Thomas': they have been established in Spain and Italy long enough to acquire residence permits, and have worked on a more or less permanent basis in construction, agriculture and/or transportation, but also in the informal sector as street vendors and the like. As a result of the economic crisis, many have lost their sources of income and are now moving northwards in search of job and income opportunities to kick-start their lives anew.

The strategies put forward by these new migrants differ from previous migration patterns by the high degree of mobility and temporality, where a much wider range of geographical areas are being scrutinized for job opportunities and other means of survival (Timera, 2009; Kastanje *et al*., 2012; Toma and Castagnone,

2015). As Schengen residents, their movement across the EU are legal, as is their stay in Denmark, as long as it does not exceed three months and they are able to cater for themselves.[1]

But obstacles transpire when it becomes clear that obtaining a work permit as non-EU citizens in Denmark is almost impossible. Only vacancies listed on the so-called 'positive list' of highly qualified professions can be opened for a labour contract, and this is only the case when no other EU citizen can fill the vacancy[2]. As very few of these mainly low-skilled migrants have such qualifications, they relapse into a position as modern 'hunter-gatherers' surviving through a mix of private charity, bottle collection and temporary informal odd jobs, moving between the Nordic capitals and Southern Europe as opportunities for income generation wax and wane. Having obtained EU citizenship—as is the situation for a few—does not radically change this picture as language barriers and other restrictions are likely also to keep this group outside of the formal labour market.

The development of such a hyper mobile and extremely flexible proletariat challenges many of our perceptions of migration. First of all, the emergence of a layer of informal, flexible and 'willing' workers defy the Danish labour system, which has so far been firmly regulated by contracts and collective agreements. Second, the practices and self-image of private charities have to adjust as international migrants—who at least in some aspects are more resourceful—replace the usual Danish clientele of alcoholics and drug users. Third, the numerical concentration, and the nature of the survival strategies of these new migrants in areas where urban regeneration initiatives proliferate, may provide a serious test of the social viability of yard redevelopment and urban gardening projects. New practices of scavenging may also conflict with residential initiatives to improve waste management and recycling in the inner city. Finally, the emergence of a new social group of scavengers living from the leftovers of the consumer society may develop a new type of social segregation—an upstairs/downstairs scenario—that conflicts with the core values of the Scandinavian welfare model. In this paper, I will try to investigate the motivations of these new migrants, the survival strategies employed and the strategies put forward to avoid the potential

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1 Schengen residents may stay in Denmark for a period of 90 days. They must provide for the necessary means to pay for their stay and return trip. According to New-to-Denmark, the official portal for foreigners "What will be considered as necessary funds depends on the length of your stay and whether you will stay at a hotel or in a privately owned home with family or friends. As a general rule, you must have at your disposal approx. DKK 350 per day. A smaller amount may be accepted if you are staying in a privately owned home and your host will cover all the costs" New-to-Denmark 2017.

2 The so-called 'positive list' includes highly specialized jobs, such as doctors, professional footballs players etc.

downward spiral of surviving as a homeless migrant in Copenhagen. I will also look at what potential conflicts between migrants and the local population of the inner city are likely to arise if no due attention is given to the problem.

Methodology

The article builds on ongoing re-research on West African homeless migrants in Copenhagen, where interviews and participant observation have been carried out in conjunction with voluntary work in different types of homeless services since 2010. It includes multi-sited fieldwork in Spain, Senegal and Berlin. As research has had to be carried out alongside other types of academic work, fieldwork has been disparate and flimsy, reflecting the situation described by Hannerz (2003, p.213) where ethnographic fieldwork increasingly becomes 'the art of the possible', consisting of short interventions spread over long periods of time. During this period, I have acted as a volunteer on a weekly basis, either as a counsellor or as a 'practical volunteer' in two different shelters hosting mainly homeless migrants. Over time, I have conducted in-depth interviews with 15 male migrants, aged between 25 and 60 years, with roots in West Africa. Some were re-interviewed at subsequent stages. Interviews were conducted in French, Spanish or English and were held outside of the shelter's grounds. In 2014, I conducted fieldwork at Roskilde Festival where I interviewed can-collectors and festival participants and acted as a volunteer in one of the refund stalls.

A large number of shorter interviews and conversations also contributed to increase my understanding of the precarious situation of these migrants, just as regular phone calls provided additional information concerning the trajectories and whereabouts of some of my interviewees. On the 'authority side' I have conducted formal interviews with the manager of the shelter and staff from the municipal area's renovation unit, and more informal interviews with the caretaker of the largest refurbished inner courtyard in the area as well as persons in charge of the municipal waste and scrap collection. Finally, I have had access to a number of excellent student reports that have provided additional life stories and insights into the everyday lives of this relatively invisible group.

Obviously, working with vulnerable people confronting homelessness requires heightened attention to certain ethical aspects and relations of power. Often the researcher is placed in a difficult situation where the interviewed express their hopes and wish that the interviewer can help ameliorate their dire situation in some way. This might have affected the accounts either by emphasizing problematic aspects connected to homelessness or by exaggerating resilience. Long term volunteering has enabled me to gain a broader perspective, just as it has enabled the establish-

ment of trust with users that have hitherto been wary of talking to outsiders. Users of the shelter, including the staff, have been informed of my research interests, but this has obviously not always been possible to communicate to all users during observation, due to the prolonged period of volunteering. I have made sure, however, that no confidential information is passed on without the consent of the migrant, and that their privacy is protected through confidentiality and anonymization of all non-official interviewees. I have not looked into whether my respondents have been implicated in illegal activities, such as informal work or drug related activities. In cases where respondents have revealed illicit activities, this has served only as background knowledge. In general, it is not likely that those migrants who are active in lucrative spheres such as drug trading would endure the dire living conditions encountered on the street and in the shelter. It is therefore not my impression that they are included among my respondents. Finally, recruitment of respondents among regular users of the shelter inevitably involves another bias, as it omits those bottle-pickers that operate independently of this form of assistance.

West African migration – From Collective Strategies to Individualized Adventurers

Although the group of itinerant job seekers in Copenhagen is vast, this paper focuses mainly on the West African migrants, which is the group I know best and also the group that has been researched the most (see for example Kastanje *et al.* 2012; Arce Bayona *et al.* 2014; Hoff, 2014; Hoff, 2016; Juul, 2016). This is probably due to their easier accessibility in terms of language, education and openness. The group is quite heterogeneous, the most visible being the Eastern Europeans, notably Poles and Lithuanians[3] (see Schmidt, 2012). To this, add the Chinese (almost invisible both in the social welfare system and in current research), people from central Europe, notably Bulgaria and Romania (often indiscriminately labeled under the common brand of Roma) and finally the West Africans.

Getting an accurate picture of the number of homeless migrants in Copenhagen is notoriously difficult. Private humanitarian organizations have made estimates that on any given day it is a matter of a few hundred (Kompasset, 2017). The Danish National Centre for Social Research (SFI), responsible for the official bi-annual count of homeless, registered the number of people without regular residence in Denmark to be 125 in 2015 (as compared to 73 in 2013 and 107 in 2011). These people were almost exclusively located in Copenhagen (Benjaminsen *et al.* 2011; 2013; 2015). While February is a good choice for counting national users, this month

[3] In many cases the Polish and Lithuanian homeless have come to Denmark through sub-contracting construction firms, but have failed to get further employment

is among the most difficult and unprofitable for bottle pickers, reason for which many have returned to their dwelling hubs in southern Europe or elsewhere. Although still relatively restricted, the number of homeless migrants is obviously larger but also highly variable across seasons. The exact distribution of people of African origin remains particularly difficult to discern due to the continuous moves of these migrants between the country of residence and one, or several EU countries, and their country of residence in Africa.

Reasons for coming to Denmark, as well as survival strategies put in place, obviously differ between groups. While part of the Polish homeless are motivated by push factors such as difficult divorces, pending prison sentences, etc., (see Schmidt, 2012), often adding alcohol abuse to their problematic situation as homeless migrants, this is seldom the case for West African migrants who generally appear to maintain strong family ties in their country of residence and/or of origin. Rather, their motivation for taking up an itinerant lifestyle is closely related to the collapse of the Southern European economies in 2008 and the ensuing crisis thereafter, which hit African migrants settled in these locations particularly hard (Torres and Gadea, 2015; Toma and Castagnone, 2015; Juul, 2017). For them, migration primarily relates to a wish to earn money and thus contribute to the survival of the family in a society with few other opportunities to achieve what is culturally expected i.e. being self-supporting, sustaining a family and gaining social status by working. How this works out will be scrutinized in the following paragraphs.

A distinctive feature of the new hyper-mobility that differentiates it from older migration patterns is that it appears far less collective in scope (Timera, 2009). As shown in Thomas' account, most of the West African migrants carry with them lengthy migration stories, characterized by a number of more or less voluntary stopovers. A surprisingly large number include a stay in Libya in their itinerary, a destination that was abandoned as civil unrest and emerging persecution of black Africans in particular pushed them north to Italy. Once there, the tightening of the economic crisis prolonged the journey further north towards Germany and Scandinavia.

The sojourns generally seem to be of shorter duration and many indicate that they carry out more or less regular circuits, which can include Malmø, Oslo, Berlin as well as other European capitals. Such movements have been characterized by the anthropologist Henrik Vigh as navigation, a term which aptly illustrates the way in which migrants can be viewed as ships at sea, sailing through open waters through waves and troughs, having to bend and yield to avoid being smashed to smithereens (Vigh, 2009). Under such circumstances, success is dependent on the ability to avoid confrontation and size up the situation, and to the best of their capability to accommodate circumstances and make the best of any given situation. The ability to

navigate may be identified in the ability to read the pulse of the city, for example knowing the whens and wheres of festivals or sports events where a large number of revellers are likely to produce an attractive number of recyclable bottles and cans.

Although the number of 'new migrants' is increasing, the foundational narrative remains: their migration was not particularly directed towards Denmark and their presence here is almost by mistake (see also Toma and Castagnione, 2015, p.79). In fact, they are confronted with a relatively regulated job market, a difficult language and an ever more restrictive immigration policy. It is therefore ironic that many indicate to have chosen Denmark as a destination because of our position through a number of years as the happiest country in the world. Other reasons may be as substantial. As explained by a Ghanaian respondent: "We did not opt for Denmark. It was the economy that brought us here". For the large majority, Denmark is not an end goal and they do not plan to stay for a longer period (Jakobsen, 2012; Juul, 2017). On the contrary, their presence is generally transient, something that does not lend to the development of a strong sense of community, which could otherwise help the individual in defending against exploitation or abuse.

These highly individualized migration experiences differ from previous migration patterns known in West Africa, where decisions to migrate were taken collectively by kin and kith who actively participated in financing the trip abroad and patiently waited for their investments to pay off. In such cases, the itinerary was well-known, with fixed destinations where kin or connections abroad would assist the youngster in starting his migration career in a receptive environment. In certain favored destinations, such as France, a formalized structure of reception based on home town associations, the so-called *foyers*, would serve as a place of refuge for the new recruits (Timera, 2009).

For the new travellers, migration is no longer collective. Particularly for the younger migrants, exploration of new destinations becomes an individualized test of manhood. Oftentimes, not even their mothers are informed before all ties are severed and a new life as an 'adventurer' begins. The individualized youngsters become what Timera (2009) has termed "orphans and adventurers". As orphans, they do not form part of any strong and well-defined network, and in its place, being adventurous becomes a measure of success.

Obviously, many of the migrants encountered in Copenhagen were beyond the rank of 'orphans' as the initial migration from Africa to Europe was carried out many years ago. Nevertheless, the decision to opt for onward migration was highly individual and interviewees quite unanimously declared to have come alone without having former knowledge or connections in Copenhagen. The (weak) ties established during their stay were only knit once they had been directed to the People's Park and the shelter by people they had asked for help upon arrival to the city

(Schmidt, 2012; Jakobsen, 2012; Kastanje *et al*., 2012). This individualization of experiences, and the loosening of social control, obviously broadens the range of opportunities and income-generating activities that are considered acceptable. Although migrants tend to team up with people from their own country of origin, these relations are not long-lasting and trust-based, but rather temporary relations of shared interest. This makes it easier to transgress previous ideas of what are acceptable ways of gaining a living.

Public Fear and Hospitality

As migrant homelessness has become increasingly visible in central Copenhagen, uneasiness has risen among local residents and neighbourhood associations. At present, restrictive policies imply that private charities and shelters find themselves as the sole caretakers of the growing number of homeless job-seeking foreigners. As few alternatives are available, migrants' daily existence hinges on private social services and the benevolence of individual citizens. As a result, complicated relations of conditional hospitality are forged in the neighbourhoods and authorities 'hosting the new guests'.

Tensions vis à vis neighbouring communities can be understood as struggles over public space (Mitchell, 2003) or as varying contours of tolerance (Johnson *et al.,* 2005) deriving from increased presence of fear and security in the public space (Pain, 2008) but also from the ways in which the migrants are being portrayed as a potential risk for society.

The notion of conditional hospitality has been introduced by Derrida (2005) to understand the relationship between stranger and host in a context of migration, integration and cosmopolitanism. Conditional hospitality is inherently political as it shapes particular identities and rights (who has the right to be welcomed?) and highlights the unequal relationship between migrants and a host society (Brun, 2010). Where unconditional hospitality demands an openness to the other, which in its extreme dissolves the relation between guest and host, hospitality in its conditional (and certainly more frequent) form, imposes duties on the guest and implies a certain degree of violence, obliging the guest to remain just so. In the text below, various experiences of conditional hospitality produced through particular interfaces between migrants, authorities and 'the Danes' are examined in order to identify processes of inclusion and exclusion as well as exploring the limits and conditionality under which these are practiced.

The Rise of a New International and Hyper Mobile Precariat?

As 'orphans' and 'adventurers' the new visitors form part of a steadily growing group of hyper mobile and flexible migrants, a special branch of what economist Guy Standing has called '*the precariat'*. According to Standing, the precariat "consists of a multitude of insecure people, living bits-and-pieces lives, in and out of short-term jobs, without a narrative of occupational development." (Standing, 2011: 1)

By using the term precariat (which in his terminology includes a very broad group from disappointed students to underpaid women to international migrants), Standing wishes to divert attention to the rapidly growing group of people living around the world, under very insecure and extremely flexible conditions, i.e., without any form of social security and welfare standards in terms of minimum wage: for this group, previous regulation of work hours, health insurance or pensions, or other elements of the social security network that workers and unions in the northern European welfare states have fought for in the course of the 20th century, are no longer an issue. In this sense, they have become denizens who have a more restricted range of social, cultural, political and economic rights than the citizens around them.

This development is the result of recent privatizations, outsourcing and the generalized use of sub-contractors, which forces many workers to live under circumstances that resemble the day-to-day employment of former times. This implies they never experience even temporary job security, but have to accept part-time jobs, often for wages that are far below minimum standards. For a growing number of people, such restructurations have implied a move from the formal labour market into the informal, or some grey zone, in between (Standing, 2012).

Also, in Denmark, a development towards a loosening of the previous strong regulation of the Danish labour market may be identified as the previous strong collaborations between employers, unions and state, is losing ground, and as it is no longer possible to exclude non-unionized workers from Danish worksites[4]. Notably in construction and cleaning, the lower level of labour-organization and the growth of subcontracting firms have led to an increase in grey-area or outright illegal working conditions. For obvious reasons, it is difficult to assess accurately the extent of this development, but indications may be found by looking at the cases where employers have been charged for employing illegal labour. Here the increase is noticeable. According to the registrations of the Danish police, the number of charges was relatively stable at less than 400 per year until 2010. 378 cases were reported in 2010, it

[4] In 2006, the European Human Rights Court of Justice decided that the practice where employers according to Danish labour agreements could only employ manpower which was organized in the central unions was illegal according to article 11 of the Human Rights Convention.

increased to 595 cases in 2012 and 610 cases in 2015 (Rigspolitiet, 2016.) Obviously, more cases exist, and the Danish Trade Unions generally estimate the number to between four to five times higher (Pedersen and Andersen, 2007). Not surprisingly, those sectors employing unregistered labour were mainly in care, cleaning, hotels and restaurants, bakeries, kiosks, agricultural activities and brothels.

Before assessing the extent of such an emergent parallel job market, it may be useful to scrutinize what different forms of illegality can be encountered in the field. On the one hand, one finds EU-citizens who may have both legal entry and work permits but who have been forced by circumstances to take work at a salary that is below normal rates; on the other, there are citizens from so-called 'third country' (non-EU) nations, who have residential permit in Schengen, whose sojourn in Denmark as a jobseeker is legal but obstructed by the fact that chances for obtaining a work permit are close to nil. In between these two, one finds an intermediate group, with people that either have exceeded their legal stay or are moving between the spheres of legality and illegality.

The migrants from West Africa may fall into any of these three categories. Many have legal residence in the Schengen zone, but are constrained when it comes to obtaining a work permit. Others have gained Spanish or Italian citizenship, but are constrained on the labour market due to a lack of Danish language skills, certified vocational skills, homelessness, etc., and finally a good number may have extended their stay in Denmark beyond the six months allowed for EU citizens. Finally, it is fruitful to distinguish between employers who make use of unregistered labour in order to depress wages and avoid taxation and illegal migrants who take on another person's identity in order to get a job in a 'white' work-site.

Even for those who have obtained EU citizenship, getting a legal job presents a huge problem. As strong and resourceful people, these migrants often arrive with a great deal of optimism (Hegnsvad & Nordentoft, 2011; Schmidt, 2011; Kastanje *et al*., 2012; Jakobsen, 2013). That the economic crisis has also had repercussions on the Danish society in terms of rising unemployment rates, comes as somewhat of a surprise. Many of the jobseekers are positively surprised during counseling in the private organization, Kompasset, when internet sites for jobseekers announce the availability of more than 13 000 jobs. Current unemployment rates are low (6.3% in 2017 (Eurostat)) and migrants do not consider language problems as a major obstacle. They are, they state, willing to take any job, and equally willing to work much harder than a Dane. "I'm a lucky man. I will get a job. God will help me," is not an unusual point of departure for job seeking. Although it is not said openly, this may, nevertheless, easily transmute into willingness also to work for lower wages and without a formal contract.

The eagerness or desperation for getting a job also opens new avenues for other people to earn money; in her study of the Danish cleaning sector, anthropologist Trine Mygind Korsby (2011) shows how the use of so-called facilitators has become a frequent method to gain access to the difficult Danish labour market. In her study, six of 14 informants acknowledged to have paid someone to help them get access to a job. The amounts for such informal services ranged from 1 900 kr. (255 euro) to 36 000 kr. and 72 000 kr. (4 600 and 9 650 euro). The smallest amounts were one-off affairs, while the two largest were the summing-up over two years of a monthly fee (Korsby, 2011, p.37) for having secured access to a job or for "renting" someone's social security card and his bank account, enabling a migrant without a work permit to work in a registered job.

For those employed in the non-formalized sector, Korsby reported frequent cases of abuse, as workers were forced to work extra hours without supplementary pay (in three cases 16 hours per day, seven days a week (Korsby, 2011, p.47)) or on lower wages than indicated in the contract. Also, other sources (Jakobsen, 2012) show how it is not unusual to do cleaning for 50 kr. an hour, and that some are even being paid in bread and cigarettes[5].

Experience from Sweden, presented in Anna Gavanas report '*Who Cleans The Welfare State'* from 2010, confirms this depressing picture. Her study shows how shifts from public to private employment in the care and cleaning sector have blurred what belongs to the white sector and what belongs to the shadow economy. In fact, many firms turn out to be involved in both informal and formal transactions. A cleaning job may be offered as white but the person employed is forced or offered to do additional work on an informal basis.

In spite of the harsh conditions, the number of workers who are willing to undertake such jobs seems to be on the rise. Among my interviewees, several have reported to have taken on informal jobs doing hard manual labour at 50 Danish kroner an hour (around six euros), helping to empty containers, cleaning, or house painting. Within the low paid sectors, it may therefore become increasingly difficult to defend reasonable work and wage conditions as employers and employees may have shared interests in keeping employment away from the sight of the tax authorities. Contrary to the situation during the first wave of mass migration in the 1960s and 1970s, it is no longer possible to force workers to be members of a trade union, and it therefore becomes hard to control that contracts are respected. Many of the younger migrants have no experience of being part of a shared and obliging working

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5 The newspaper of the union of unskilled worker, Fagbladet 3F has reported many cases of worker being paid 3 000- to 6 000kr monthly for full time work in the cleaning sector, (see for example Fagbladet nr. 3, April 2013, or Fagbladet 3F, nr.11, November 2012), where standard salary according to 3F is between 21 000 and 23 000 before taxation (Fagbladet 3F, nr. 11, Nov. 2012)

community. Having to fight for each job on provisional contracts, they develop what Standing (2012, p.590) has framed a "morality of opportunism", where the individual is fighting to gain a living, even when it is at the expense of others.

Bottle Picking and Recycling

Disappointed by the difficulties of getting a job, some decide to move to other countries, such as Sweden, where the labour market is less restrictive. Others decide to stay on and make the best of the existing situation, as explained below:

> Most people are here only temporarily. They are here to get a job. But the law is so restrictive. Those who have only European residency are not allowed to work. It is a closed society for immigrants. There is no room (…) Nobody is happy doing this thing [can collecting], but we have no alternative. We are already here. The only alternative is to engage in crime, stealing and robbing people. The government says it is not a job. That is why we cannot be penalized for doing this. That is why we are doing it. (Nigerian male, Dec. 2015)

Denmark has a long tradition for recycling of bottles and cans, based on a principle of economic compensation. The aim is both to limit litter in the streets and to improve resource management. If cans and bottles are bought back to the recycling systems in supermarkets and shops, a compensation, "pant", is released. Compared to many other places, the compensation for recyclables in Denmark is relatively high: 15 cents for a small can or bottle, 20 cents for medium size, and 40 cents for the largest recyclable bottles. Bottle collection has always served as a means for homeless or destitute people to gain a quick buck for a drink or a cigarette. At present, this activity has largely been taken over by the more systematic bottle-picking migrants. Many migrants consider picking cans from trash-bins to be an issue of considerable stigma. As described elsewhere, the West Africans in particular avoid talking about such nightly income generating activities and find it revolting to put their hands into bins where other people might have vomited (Schmidt, 2011; Kastanje *et al*., 2012). Nevertheless, seeing people with two plastic bags full of bottles on the handlebars of their bike late at night has become a frequent sight in the inner city, as are the queues in front of the machines where you exchange the recyclables for cash.

For some, bottle collection has turned out to be a viable solution in their present situation and is increasingly perceived as an alternative labour market to those excluded from the formal one. For those who become 'pros', bottle-picking becomes part of a circular migration strategy, where migrants oscillate between Denmark and the country of residence on a regular basis, with frequent returns to renew their documents or look for income opportunities 'at home'. While incomes

are meagre during winter[6], providing just enough for cigarettes and telephone cards, results are far better in the summer, where more people spend time on out-door recreations. The attractions of Danish outdoor life are well explained by this Ghanaian man:

> The crucial thing is the refund, and, unlike in Sweden, people here leave it all over the place. That is one reason why so many people come here. The refund was the first thing I heard about when I was in Spain. You see, if I am hungry here I do not have to beg. I can walk from street to street. I can pay for a shower and I do not have to commit crime to get by. I can just pick up some cans. (Jobless migrant from Nigeria, acting as special reporter for the internet journal den fri.dk at Roskilde Festival (www.denfri.dk))

During summer music festivals, *bottle picking, cherchez les empty* or *collecting the pant* becomes a core activity for many international migrants. Not least, large music festivals such as Roskilde festival, become important hunting grounds for bottles, where active effort may not only make the investment of 1800 Danish kroner (240 euro) for the entry fee worthwhile, but also produce a substantial benefit for the collectors, who are there only to pick bottles[7]. While refund collectors limit the amount of waste on the festival ground, the presence of so many competing can-pickers obviously creates problems. In some instances, the presence of many competing collectors has provoked some of the music consumers to react with unfriendly and even racist reactions. As a benevolent and non-profit organization, Roskilde Festival has tried to find avenues through which can-hunters can interact with festival-goers in a decent manner, where racism and abuse are limited. To live up to the ethos of the festival as being inclusive and tolerant, (the so-called 'orange feeling') much effort has been put into limiting such negative attitudes. The encounter between youthful music consumers and poor migrants nevertheless remains challenging, both because recycling and can hunting—which has previously been collected for charitable purposes—is now the object of individual appropriation and because the festival is now divided between festival goers and those cleaning up, a division between an upstairs and a downstairs which doesn't quite match the original intentions of the festival.

> The ticket is expensive – you have to work for three days before it is paid. I came with a friend—but when it comes to collecting, everyone works for himself. There is big competition. You have to be strong. You have to work like a machine that never tires. The only reason I agreed to talk to you is that is that I'm in a good mood today. Things have gone well today. I work systematically along the tents.

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6 3-4 euro on weekdays to 40-50 euros during weekends, according to my informants

7 According to rumors, the wages gained may be considerable. Sums between 10000, 30000 kr and 50000 kr (€4000) for a week's work have been mentioned.

> I get around 300 kr pr. sack. […] Yeah, Sodom and Gomorra—that's a good way to characterize it. They only drink, dance and make love. I realize that many of them are only between 17 to 20 years old. They are all very rude when you approach them; they say: Nej, nej, Nej. They treat us like a piece of shit. One guy called the security guard when I approached him. I hate the harassment and the embarrassment. (Nigerian man living in Sweden, 2014)

Many efforts are made by the various organisations dealing with the new migrants to ease tensions during street festivals. The Blue Cross, for example, engaged the organizers of the annual Distortion Street festival of Copenhagen—which attracts around 100 000 people during five days of partying at different venues around central Copenhagen—to distribute a waistcoat with the label "Refund-collector" on the back. According to the collectors, this increased friendliness and engages partygoers in helping them to access the cans. Nevertheless, it has not completely eradicated the often denigrating and racist behavior.

Also, outside of the festival, interests may clash between those trying to survive on the leftovers of the welfare society and the interests of activists and municipalities to improve the physical environment of the city. As competition in can-hunting increases, some groups—mainly people from central Europe who have a long experience of living at the margins of society—have taken up scavenging on a more comprehensive level. Of particular interest to this group is electronic waste, where valuable metals such as copper wire can be extracted by burning off the plastic coating. Other types of valuable metal from electronic scrap are exchangeable for cash. Add to this clothing and other forms of recyclables. As was the case with the benevolent can-picking-for-charity purposes, such private recycling initiatives tend to clash with the interests of neighborhood associations and municipalities.

During the last decade, recycling policies in the inner city of Copenhagen have become far more wide-ranging. Through voluntary waste selection by private households who sort their solid waste into a variety of different containers, the municipality is able to accumulate considerable returns from recycling of valuable waste. Conflicts are therefore likely to arise when scavengers' own selection implies that invaluable litter is spread outside the containers, or alternatively dumped in containers designated for other types of waste, rendering the value of the container worthless. Likewise, scavengers may manage to seize the most valuable scrap before the municipal refuse collectors are able to collect it. This brings the scavengers into direct conflict with both refuse collectors and caretakers in charge of keeping such areas clean. It also undermines the structure of compensation upon which the recycling system is based.

Hibernation

Can picking and bottle collecting is usually combined with what we have termed 'hibernation' (Kastanje *et al.*, 2012) which enables the 'visitor' to keep living expenses to a minimum, safeguarding savings and thereby avoiding overstretching social networks in the country of residence. While can-collection and others types of scavenging may provide the new visitors with a small but crucial income, their survival, not least in wintertime, hinges on access to private charities and shelters where it is possible to benefit from services such as shelter, free or cheap food, showers and laundry facilities. This way of moving away from one's kin and kith in order not to strain family budgets, which we have called 'hibernation', is a well-known survival strategy in West Africa, where 'visiting a (richer) relative' and helping out in exchange for food and shelter has long served as a means in times of crisis (see Juul, 2005). As described elsewhere, many migrants develop certain routines while in Denmark, where various social 'places', i.e. breakfast places and soup kitchens, are visited on a daily basis; also, libraries and other places where the internet is available are popular as on-line job seeking can be carried out along with Facebook updates and other types of contacts with friends and family in their homeland.

Since 2007, subsequent Danish governments have expressed anxiety that "Denmark would develop into a 'crowd-puller for Europe's poverty migrants". To lessen the attraction of the Danish welfare system, the former liberal/conservative government disallowed state-funded shelters and soup kitchens to cater for visitors who did not hold a Danish social security card to avoid Denmark becoming "the warm shelter for the homeless of Europe"[8].The policy has been continued under subsequent governments irrespective of political ideology and was summarized neatly by Inger Støjberg, MP for the liberal party "Venstre" and currently Minister of Integration:

> These people should not be here at all. There is no chance that they will go home once they find out that they can get a bed, clothes and food and that they are doing really well here. Why should they leave? Crime levels are already high and this will attract even more. If I were poor in Romania, I'd also rush to Denmark, if I knew how well I would be treated. At home, they have nothing. (Inger Støjberg in TV2, Nov. 2013)

8 The idea of shelters as crowd pullers for Europe's poor was first introduced by Minister of Social Affairs Karen Jespersen (from the Liberal party, Venstre) in 2007. The argument was later repeated by several MPs, including Ministers, Benedikte Kiær (Conservative) (Politiken 5 dec. 2010) and Inger Støjberg (Venstre) (TV2 2013).

Although the Socialdemocratic Burgo-Master of Copenhagen recognizes the need to avoid leaving migrants to sleep outside during winter, his approach rests on a perception that migrants have been misinformed about their possibilities on the Danish labour market and therefore should be repatriated (Frank Jensen in TV2, Nov. 2013).

At present, foreign migrants cannot get any help from the Danish social system except in case of life-threatening illness. The few shelters that are open for homeless migrants have therefore experienced a huge increase in the number of users and an almost complete change of their clientele. Financed primarily by private means, and small and irregular donations from the state and municipality, these voluntary organizations have found themselves as the sole caretakers in charge of the growing number of homeless job-seeking migrants.

The arrival of an entirely new group of users, with needs very different from those of the traditional Danish users, represents a considerable challenge for the organizations and their volunteers. As shown in a study carried out by Hegnsvad and Nordentoft in 2011, the new users are in many ways more resourceful than the homeless Danes, as they seldom have problems of alcohol or drug abuse or psychiatric problems. Hence the demand for care or a chat with the volunteers is easily turned into a situation where the volunteers become service providers—of tea, coffee, food, clothes—but no longer form a close relationship with the service users, who are only there temporarily. The huge demand also serves to squeeze out certain users. As access to shelter is limited, one has to queue in order to get a dish in the soup kitchen and participate in a lottery to get access to a bed. This has led many of the Danish users, who have other options, to abandon the private social services, much to the regret of staff and volunteers. The professionals and volunteers, on the other hand, acknowledge the lack of alternatives available for this group and have found new strategies that accommodate the needs of the new user groups. Nevertheless, Hegnsvad and Nordentoft (2011) describe a certain dissatisfaction and despondency among volunteers who feel they are the only ones taking care of a huge problem that no-one else seems to care about and which they themselves are not able to solve in a satisfactory manner.

In reality, the limited availability of space and shelter contributes to undermine the open-door policies that are central to the largest of the private charity organizations. As space is limited, more resourceful migrants, such as the West Africans, are able to squeeze out the more vulnerable groups such as the Eastern European alcohol abusers and the Roma families, who are less outspoken. This leads to the final challenge that will be discussed in the paper: the issue of unregulated camping and the lack of public toilets.

Shrinking Commons and Irregular Camping

As space is limited, homeless people of all types may be forced to sleep outside when there is no room left in the shelter. To combat development of internal hierarchies between migrant groups, where the weakest groups are squeezed out, beds are attributed by means of a lottery. Nevertheless, the number of East and Central European rough sleepers seems to be slightly higher than among Africans. Rough sleeping is most visible during summer and some areas of town are more 'blessed' than others. Notably the area of Inner Nørrebro has experienced a steady increase in the number of people sleeping in parks and private inner courtyards.

The attraction of this area is probably a combination of its closeness to the inner city, where the most attractive hunting grounds for scrap and bottles are located, and its nearness to the private charities. Finally, Nørrebro prides itself of having some of the few places left in Copenhagen where the inner courtyards of apartment houses are not gated but accessible to everyone. The courtyards are often very attractive, with flowers, trees and shrubs, and many corners and bushes to create a feeling of privacy and coziness. Some of the courtyards are part of urban gardening experiments and some even have installed wooden hammocks so that the inhabitants and by-passers can have a rest and look into the greenery from a horizontal perspective.

The bushes turn out to be attractive for homeless migrants in need not only of night refuge, but also of places where belongings of different sorts may be stored or hidden. Although the inhabitants of this area pride themselves for being tolerant and inclusive, a certain fatigue with the number of people camping in what are basically their private gardens may be detected. These tensions also reflect a general up-turn in ownership where flats in the area are increasingly privately owned and inhabited by richer layers of society (Schmidt, 2015). Conflicts have also increased, as it turns out that due to the continuing elimination of the city's public toilet facilities, the bushes are also used as toilets. As a result, the residents have called for the public authorities to take action on the problems and not leave it for the local residents and caretakers to deal with what is considered a problem basically related to globalization and the free movement of labour.

The reaction of some politicians—including some from the Social Democratic Party—has been to call for more police control, where citizens of Romanian origin, for example, are woken up and searched for stolen goods and in other ways pressured and ostracised in order to limit their presumed criminal activities and motivate them to return to their homeland (Trine Bramsen in Politiken 2013). Harassment by the police has increased and homeless migrants have, in several cases, been fined for sleeping rough in schoolyards or parks, and even for seeking shelter in the event of inclement weather. In these cases, NGOs have taken the cases to court, which have ruled in favour of the rights of immigrants to occupy public space. Nevertheless, it

has created a general feeling of persecution among the homeless migrants. Lately[9], the mayor of Copenhagen, Frank Jensen, has called for a reform of the refund system in order to make it less attractive to foreigners visiting Denmark with the intention of engaging in this kind of income generating activities.

Fortunately, others have adopted a more understanding attitude, acknowledging that the issue is part of a larger problem related to poverty and migration.

Conclusion

The increasing number of immigrants arriving in Denmark, either as part of a search for permanent job possibilities, or temporarily as part of a hyper-mobile survival strategy, raises a number of challenges for the state and the municipality of Copenhagen. Through 'bottle picking', migrants have been able to create a job-market where there formerly was none, but as non-taxpayers they have little or no rights and little attention is given to their presence except in the few shelters that are open for people without residence permits. Their positions as modern 'hunter gatherers' has forced benevolent organisations such as Roskilde Festival, and Distortion, to adopt new strategies which take the existence of this new and parallel layer of waste pickers into account.

At present the authorities are balancing between a policy of being *laissez-faire* and turning a blind eye to the problem, and an active strategy of ostracising and criminalizing the new migrants. As 'urban commons' in terms of public toilets, etc., are shrinking, and the amount of space in shelters and the like are limited, a competition arises between different groups of migrants where the less resourceful are pushed out and literally end up defecating in people's private gardens.

In order to avoid such issues, it seems crucial to find local solutions that must include a much wider range of services to provide for the new guests, to avoid that the resourceful people who have contributed to make Nørrebro and other parts of Copenhagen attractive through local refurbishment initiatives, are losing faith and are moving from the inner city. The present policies of limiting access to social facilities and open public spaces certainly makes it unattractive for foreign migrants, but it does not limit the number of 'guests'.

At present, different experiments have been started as part of the city's regeneration programs and neighbourhood associations, but knowledge about current practices of conviviality and conditional hospitality remains limited. There is a need to increase understanding of how migrants' survival strategies and of interfaces between neighbourhoods, municipality and migrants, are practiced.

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9 See Politiken 27th and 30th of November 2016. https://www.b.dk/nationalt/nyt-pantsystem-skal-holde-romaer-vaek-fra-koebenhavn-de-lever-et-usselt-liv-og-sk

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Local Representations of Homelessness in Copenhagen, Glasgow and Gothenburg: A Cross-City Policy Analysis

Frida Petersson

University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Abstract_ *The aim of this article is to discuss local policies and actions plans on homelessness in three European cities: Copenhagen, Glasgow and Gothenburg, with a specific focus on the processes whereby specific situations and subjects become defined as "homeless problems" and made into targets for policy measures. Drawing on Carol Bacchi's "what's the problem represented to be" framework, the analysis in this article seeks to elucidate implicit assumptions and underlying rationales for the homelessness strategies in the research sites, highlighting similarities and differences between them, as well as across the three countries. Insights from intersectionality are used to explore how local policies position individuals who lack housing discursively as homeless with differential disadvantages and needs, creating hierarchies of deserving versus undeserving, whilst at the same time masking over broader political economic structures that dictate homeless peoples' access to social, economic and material recourses. Despite claims to the contrary, dominant official discourses of inclusion and equality thus reproduce, rather than challenge, socially structured relations of inequality.*[1]

Keywords_ *Homelessness, local policy-making, problem representations, intersectionality, cross-city analysis*

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Introduction

Homelessness and housing exclusion constitute a high-profile topic in political debate across Europe and beyond. As the problem of people lacking stable housing intensifies, so does the search for possible solutions, and research into effective strategies to prevent homelessness. Within the context of the EU it is not unusual to apply common solutions to what is seen as common problems through the process of policy transfer, and many EU-states have adopted national strategies or action plans to combat homelessness. Despite similar welfare policies, some of these are quite different. A few countries, like France and the UK, have gone a step further and made legislative changes to improve the situation for groups most at risk of facing homelessness. Still, national monitoring reports indicate that homelessness has increased in many EU countries during the last decade (FEANTSA, 2012). Sometimes, this rise is linked to the financial and economic crisis, while in other cases it is said to rather reflect a lack of a national homeless strategy. However, the simple fact that two countries have adopted similar national strategies on homelessness does not necessarily imply similar interpretation and implementation at the local level (Cloke *et al.*, 2001; Benjaminsen *et al.*, 2009; Gosme and Anderson, 2015).

In this paper, I examine local policies and actions plans on homelessness in three European cities; Copenhagen, Glasgow and Gothenburg, with a specific focus on the processes whereby specific situations and subjects become defined as "homeless problems" and made into targets for policy measures. The intention is to identify local representations of homelessness in the different sites, highlighting differences and similarities between and across the three cities. Carol Bacchi's (2009) *What's the problem represented to be* approach to policy analysis ("WPR") is employed as a lens through which to examine the discursive construction of the "homeless problem" taking place in the three cities' strategies in this area. In addition, I explore what an intersectional approach to policy analysis may contribute when used to study the area of homelessness. Within this kind of constructionist-based analytical approach, "policy language becomes a focus of analysis in its own right" (Marston, 2002, p.88), rather than being approached as a window into an objective reality. The empirical analysis in this article does not examine the issue of policy implementation, i.e. the impact of different policies on local delivery of homeless services is not focused. As been pointed out by Hastings (1998), among others, documents are but one aspect of policy making. However, following Jacobs (2006), I argue that analysing language use in policy documents is essential in providing a starting place for development of a framework through which further analysis of local homeless practices can be pursued.

The structure of the paper is as follows. First, I introduce the theoretical framework that will guide my analysis, before turning to the context, data and methodology of the study. In subsequent sections, I apply Bacchi's WPR approach to the policies under study in order to identify, firstly, key representations of the "homeless problem". Secondly, I examine underlying assumptions and presumptions about the nature of homelessness and homeless people underpinning the policies. I uncover how well-intentioned policy formulations actually may (re)produce homelessness as a social problem rooted in individual deficiencies and personal failures. Finally, I attend to the discursive silences in the problem representations at hand and show how official discourses of inclusion and equality – despite claims to the contrary – reproduce, rather than challenge, socially structured relations of inequality.

Theoretical Background

Proceeding from the basic assumption that social problems are not given or self-evident, but rather social constructions, Bacchi's (1999; 2009) approach to policy is Foucauldian and grounded in discourse analysis. This view of the discursive turn in policy studies (Fairclough, 2013) considers social policy a "discursive activity" that limits what can be talked about in a specific policy area (Bacchi, 1999, p.49). Within discourses, here defined as "the language, concepts and categories employed to frame an issue" (ibid., p.2), certain conceptual frameworks are formed that shape certain ways of interpreting perceived problems, and also in establishing possible solutions. The task when undertaking a WPR-analysis, then, is not to identify "real" problems but rather to focus on *how* problems are represented. The point is that the way in which a problem is constituted on a policy level influences what kinds of solution are deemed proper and to be established. This, in turn, carries all sorts of implications for peoples' everyday life, as politically recommended actions translate into practical intervention, hence affecting lived lives. Bacchi's approach corresponds to governmentality scholars' notion of discourse as "a normative system" (Dardot and Laval, 2013, p.2) consisting of a set of values and ideals regarding what is good and bad, right and wrong. Here, the significance of attending to language when analysing policy lies not only in revealing the "systems of thought", but also "the systems of action" through which authorities seek to instantiate government (Rose and Miller, 2010, p.275).

Indeed, a significant literature exists that take the perspective on language outlined above to examine housing and homeless policy (Hastings, 2000; Sahlin, 2004; Hansen Löfstrand, 2010) as well as local homeless practices (Juhila, 2003; Schneider, 2009; Bretherton *et al.*, 2013). However, public polices and interventions are neither neutral nor experienced in the same way by all populations. Intersectional policy scholars such as Hankivsky (2012; 2014) argue that applying intersectional

lenses highlights the fact that single identity markers, such as gender, age and (dis) ability does not reflect the lived experience of peoples' lives. An intersectionality-informed policy analysis emphasises the mutually constitutive nature of social inequalities by, for example, class, race, gender, and sexuality. Thus, it moves beyond particular populations and aim attention to the intersections – i.e. specific combinations – of social categories and structures of power (Hankivsky *et al.*, 2014). There is a scarcity of intersectional studies in the homelessness field (but see Kingfisher, 2007; Zufferey, 2009). The capacity of intersectionality-informed policy research to expand understandings of inequalities as shaped by interlocking systems of oppression is well demonstrated within the fields of health (see Hankivsky *et al.*, 2012; Hunting, 2014), equality (see Cruells and Coll-Planas, 2013; Reisel, 2014), and drug research (see Young *et al.*, 2005; Miller and Carbone-Lopez, 2015). When incorporated in a comparative policy analysis, such an approach holds the potential to identify earlier unnoticed challenges and inequalities within and between various homeless policies. This, in turn, might open up a possibility to inform policy makers and homeless initiatives in ways that might align better with the complex realities of different homeless populations.

Empirical Data and Method

This study forms a part of a larger planned ethnographic case study into local homeless practices in three EU cities: Copenhagen, Glasgow and Gothenburg. The intention is to trace and analyze the strategies, procedures and techniques through which national and city policies are translated into concrete local homeless practices in the research sites, highlighting similarities and differences within them, as well as across them. A key question is whether, and if so, in what ways local homeless services, as encountered by homeless people, are actually different in the three cities. If this is the case, to what extent and in what respects can the difference be explained and understood with reference to the different national and local strategies? Thus, the following analysis should be considered as a first step of a more developed study on local homeless practices across the EU.

Comparative policy analyses within contemporary housing studies are typically carried out on country level, using quantitative methods, and comparisons are often made in relation to theoretically distinct welfare regimes and housing systems (e.g. Stephens and Fitzpatrick, 2007; Benjaminsen *et al.*, 2009; Benjaminsen and Knutagård, 2016). This predominance of comparative analysis on national-level data has been criticised, as welfare policies and legislation operate at regional and city levels (Fitzpatrick and Christian, 2006; Fitzpatrick, 2012). While acknowledging the work carried out by FEANTSA (2012; Busch-Geertsema, 2014), and prior to 2004 by European Observatory on Homelessness, little qualitative comparative housing

research has been undertaken. In this paper, local homeless policies are in focus. For practical and ethical reasons, I chose to concentrate on written texts available to the general public on official websites. Hardly surprisingly, I found a vast amount of policy related documents linked to housing and homelessness in all three cities, covering an extended time span. Following Bacchi's (2009) recommendations, I narrowed my focus to concrete policy documents, i.e. "prescriptive texts" (p.34), "designed to be read, learned, reflected upon, and tested out" (p.12).

The selection of texts to serve as units of analysis was finally limited to currently operating local homeless policies and action plans in the selected cities.[2] These documents represent the final versions of earlier drafts that have gone through a process of negotiation.[3] In Fairclough's (2008, p.43) words, they are "the outcome of a process of negotiation about which voices should be included in the text and in what relation". While recognizing the limitations of not attending to the temporal dimensions involved in policy processes, this strategy of "targeted sampling" (Linders, 2008, p.475) of documents links to the paper's aim of "placing the analytic spotlight on a particular process of social construction" (ibid.). Since local level policies are shaped by national plans and legislation, I initially examined national strategies and political bills from legislators and other governmental institutions on homelessness in the three countries. These documents were, however, not included as units of analysis. I searched publications through official websites and reference lists of previous and contemporary local homeless policies in the selected cities. In order to get a deeper understanding of the local contexts and meanings, I made additional efforts to study documents produced by various NGO's and interest groups in the homeless area, using search engines such as Google and Google Scholar. Given the vast amount of texts (reports, pamphlets, books, newspaper articles, etc.) published on the issue of homelessness in the chosen cities, this exertion made me fear to "drown" in data of potentially dubious relevance. Hence, I chose to exclude this category of texts from the data analysis.

Five distinct policy documents comprise the data set used in this study: two from Copenhagen and Glasgow respectively, and one from Gothenburg. The policies covered were all published by the local City Council and they are summarised in Table 1.

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2 Obviously, written policy documents comprise only one element of policy processes. Formal meetings, public debates, informal discussions, as well as the implementation process are other examples of possible units of analysis that are not attended to in this article.

3 Tracing this editing process comprises an alternative analytical route to locate dominant homeless discourses (see Marston, 2002).

Table 1: Empirical Data

	Copenhagen	Glasgow	Gothenburg
Local strategies (titles, period, abbreviations)	*Social Strategy – a good life for all Copenhageners* 2014–2017 (SSC) *Copenhagen Board of Social Welfare's foundational paper* 2014–2017 (CBSW)	*Glasgow's Housing Strategy* 2011/2012–2015/2016 (GHS) *Glasgow Health & Social Care Partnership Homelessness Strategy* 2015–2020 (GPHS)	*Homelessness Strategy for the City of Gothenburg* 2015–2018 (HSG)

All the selected texts are quite detailed as they set out a structure for achieving a range of city-specific goals in relation to homelessness, but they differ with regard to scope and focus. For example, while the SSC, CBSW and GHS represent broader, strategic approaches (including, but not limited to, homelessness), the GPHS and HSG specifically target the local homelessness field during the period covered.

In employing the WPR framework my approach to the data was discourse analytic, with special attention given to key words, binaries and social categories within the texts (Fairclough, 2001; 2008). Bacchi (2009, p.2) suggests a set of questions that facilitate the unpacking of problem representations and my analysis was guided by the following: (1) What's the "problem" (i.e. homelessness) represented to be in the specific policy? (2) What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the "problem"? (3) What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? The first question might seem straightforward at first glance, but when I started scrutinizing the retrieved documents it was like "opening up a babushka doll" (Cort, 2011, p.25, my translation), i.e. not only one problem representation could be discerned, but several. When shifting attention to "people categories" (Bacchi, 1999, p.2) in the texts (i.e. representations of different groups of homeless people), I made use of intersectionality-informed questions such as: who is included in this category? Who is considered the most privileged or least advantaged? Where are the discursive silences in this problem representation? Through engagement of this kind the ambition was to identify locally distinct as well as cross-border understandings of what "homelessness" entails within a contemporary EU setting. While rejecting the notion of the objective researcher, I am cognisant of my position as an outsider in relation to the concrete homeless practices in Copenhagen and Glasgow. It is most likely that a researcher with in-depth, local knowledge of the field might find additional and/or different representations of the "homeless problem". However, in line with feminist standpoint theorists (such as Smith, 2005), I argue that knowledge is always situated. My experiences as a white, Western woman researcher inevitably influences what kind of data is collected, and how the collected data is subsequently interpreted. Acknowledging the role of the researcher in the production of knowledge, in turn, raises important issues of representation that should be of concern to all researchers.

The National and Local Contexts

Despite differences with regards to social welfare regimes (Denmark and Sweden representing the social-democratic welfare regime, while the UK represents the liberal counterpart), the selected countries may all be defined as prosperous welfare states (Mostowska, 2015). Although there are considerable diversities in housing systems and provision across the states, they all have a relatively substantial (albeit shrinking) public and private rental housing sector. Also, in recent years the general trend in all countries chosen has been a pressure towards more market-oriented solutions of housing provision and less state intervention (Bengtsson *et al.*, 2013). However, unlike the Scottish rights-based housing strategy, which represents a forceful legal framework in preventing and protecting people from homelessness, there is no legislative framework implying an individual statutory and enforceable right to permanent housing in neither Denmark or Sweden.[4] Like in many EU countries, the legal responsibility for attending to the needs of homeless people here lies at the municipalities (i.e. local authorities) that are to provide funding or services in accordance with social welfare legislation (Busch-Geertsema *et al.*, 2010). Likewise, it is local authorities in Scotland that are to carry out the statutory duties towards homeless people, meaning that by law, all unintentionally homeless households must be provided at least with temporary accommodation. All three countries carry out systematic national counts to monitor the scope and profile of homelessness. Despite some variation in methodology and definitions used, commonalities in approaches of Denmark and Sweden have enabled nation-level comparisons, showing that in larger cities the level of homelessness is of similar size across countries (even when adjusting for definitions used and population size) (Benjaminsen and Dyb, 2008).

The chosen cities were selected on the basis of similarities in terms of prosperity (e.g., established welfare systems and relatively high level of welfare provision) and comparatively extensive homeless service provision on the one hand (Mostowska, 2015), and considerable differences with regard to national legislation, housing systems, and local arrangements in the area of homelessness on the other (Boesveldt *et al.*, 2017). Furthermore, count data on municipal level reveals that despite a shared officially stated ambition to combat homelessness on a local level, the three cities all face a shrinking stock of affordable housing and rising rates of homelessness (Benjaminsen and Hesselberg Lauritzen, 2015; City of Gothenburg, 2016; Scottish Government, 2016).

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4 However, there are legally enforceable obligations for local authorities to provide emergency accommodation for people in acute homelessness in both of these countries.

Copenhagen

The capital of Denmark is the country's most populated city with a municipal population of about 591 500. The Danish Homelessness Strategy implemented 2009 -2013 is one of few European examples of a large-scale Housing First programme. This national approach is based on a close cooperation between national and municipality level authorities and stresses the need for integrated individualised social support in addition to provide permanent accommodation (Hansen, 2010). Characterised by a close partnership between the state and the municipalities, where the latter is provided extra resources for implementing Housing First in combination with evidence-based methods, the Danish approach has been singled out as a "success story" with the potential to serve as an example for other EU-states (Benjaminsen, 2013; Busch-Geertsema, 2014). Public housing, i.e. municipally owned rental housing, make up 20% of the total housing stock in Denmark and in Copenhagen, one third of vacant flats in the public housing sector are reserved for municipial referral. Nevertheless, the city saw an 5% increase in homelessness levels between 2009 and 2013 (Benjaminsen and Hesselberg Lauritzen, 2015).[5]

Glasgow

With a population of close to 600 000 people, Glasgow represents the largest city in Scotland. It is also home to the country's largest homeless population. Unlike most local authorities in Scotland, Glasgow City Council no longer serves as a landlord. Instead, actors from the private and voluntary sector provide social rented housing to homeless people and large-scale homeless shelters for men run by the city have been closed. The Housing First model has been piloted as a project in Glasgow since 2010, with evaluations indicating positive outcomes (Johnsen and Fitzpatrick, 2013). At the same time, there is a variety of housing support services for homeless people in the city, many of which are based on a "treatment first" philosophy, and concerns have been raised that homelessness in Scotland is likely to increase as a result of welfare reforms such as the "bedroom tax" and stricter benefit sanctions for job seekers (SFHA, 2014). Even if there has been a decline in the number of people sleeping rough, recent statistics also indicate an overall increase in homeless applications received in the city during the last years (Scottish Government, 2016).[6]

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5 The definition of "homeless" draws on the ETHOS´ classification of homelessness that covers persons who have no residence, are homeless, live in insecure and/or insufficient housing.

6 The term "homeless" here draws on the ETHOS´ classification of homelessness that covers persons who have no residence, are homeless, live in insecure and/or insufficient housing. However, as Pawson and Davidson (2008) points out, the concept of "homelessness" as embodied in the Scottish legislation might be subject to interpretation on local authority level.

Gothenburg

As the second-largest city in Sweden, Gothenburg has a population of roughly 550 000. In contrast to its neighbouring Nordic countries, no national homeless plan has been presented in Sweden since 2007, when the government adopted a time-limited strategy against homelessness and housing exclusion for the period 2007-2009 (for a critical review, see Sahlin, 2015). Over the last decade, there has been a shift in directions to reduce homelessness in the city. Even though limited state interest and resources are invested in this area nationally, the city has recently adopted an ambitious homeless strategy, with "a city without homeless people" as its ultimate goal. Instead of promoting and expanding the staircase model, the need to provide more long-term solutions has been emphasised, at least on a rhetorical level (Hansen Löfstrand, 2010). Yet, the most recent local survey shows an increase of 3% in homelessness in 2016 – most of which are people sleeping rough – compared to the 2015 figure (City of Gothenburg, 2016).[7]

Representations of the "Homelessness Problem" and "the Homeless"

In what follows, implicit problem representations of homelessness in the retrieved local policies are "unpacked". When quoting Swedish and Danish documents, the original language has been translated to English.[8]

Copenhagen

Already the introductory sentence in the city's Social Strategy makes clear that "Copenhagen is a fabulous city to live in… a fellowship, where Copenhageners trust and look after each other". Unfortunately, not everybody have the possibility to be a part of this presumably tightknit community and "live the life they dream of":

> [S]ome because they due to disabilities rely on others to do many of the things that others take for granted. Others live on the edge of society or are completely outside. Often it is due to social problems that have taken over so much of one's life that one can no longer hold down a job, take care of one´s child, or get through the day without alcohol. There are no human beings who wish to live such a life.

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7 "Homeless" is defined in line with the categories suggested in the ETHOS´ typology, with the exception of insufficient housing that is not considered to be a form of homelessness.

8 While recognizing translation as an inherent obstacle in international comparative research (Mangen, 1999; Temple and Young, 2004), the sampling reduced difficulties related to language and translation of the documents, as I speak all languages involved.

Contrary to earlier polices in the city specifically addressing homelessness, the CBSW and SSC represent a broader approach that aim to include "all Copenhageners in need of support from the social services (…) no matter if it regards children, substance abuse, psychiatric disorder, disability or homelessness" (SSC, p.30). Still, in both documents "vulnerable Copenhageners" in need of social assistance are continually singled out and constructed as an important target group. Variously described as "vulnerable", "socially vulnerable" and "with social problems", it is hard to assess exactly what is implied by this category, since it is never clearly defined. That homelessness falls under the scope of "vulnerable" is made clear in the first stated policy objective in both strategies: "1 000 vulnerable Copenhageners" are expected to have been assigned housing in 2017. In addition, less housed Copenhageners are to be evicted, more people assigned housing will stay housed, and the number of "Danish homeless" in the city will be reduced. The apparent problem representation here is that *homelessness concerns people with a local connection* firstly, secondarily *Danes* from other parts of the country that lack local connection. Given that local authorities in most EU states require that homeless people can prove their connection to the city or municipality to qualify for support, this outline is hardly surprising. This picture is also in line with previous reports highlighting that the severe shortage of social housing in Denmark coincides with a tendency of municipalities to focus on local residents, despite the possibility to also attend to the housing needs of nationals (Baptista *et al.*, 2015).

To identify implicit problem representations Bacchi (2009) recommends examining the underlying reasons for the problem in question, as described in policies. In both the SSC and CBSW, one explaining factor as to why homelessness persists in the city is a lack of adequate housing supply, which seems to indicate a housing-led policy focus. However, this structural orientation stands beside an individualising discourse centred on personal traits of the "vulnerable":

> Prices for public housing in Copenhagen are generally high compared to the ability to pay among vulnerable locals. (…) [E]ven if the Social Service Administration's [SSA] interventions are dependent on the provision of inexpensive housing, the SSA has limited influence on whether the appropriate housing stock is available (CBSW, p.7).

In the excerpt, excessive housing prices and shortage of affordable housing are mentioned. Still, the phrase "compared to the ability to pay among vulnerable locals" illustrates the imbedded transfer of the causes of homelessness to an individual level continuously taking place in the Copenhagen texts. The excerpt above also illustrates how the prevailing market-oriented system regarding production and distribution of local housing is taken for granted and presented as a "fact" that appears to be natural and, therefore, little can be done about. The direction of future

efforts subsequently becomes extensive collaboration with "various partners" – most often the private rented sector – to solve the lack of "affordable housing for vulnerable Copenhageners" (ibid.).

Turning to people categories portrayed in the strategies, there is a clear focus on additional social problems and personal deficits when homeless people are mentioned. An illustrative example is when the need to provide housing for "vulnerable Copenhageners" is accounted for:

> Social vulnerability is reinforced if you do not have a home. It [homelessness] makes it difficult to deal with social problems such as a messy economy, substance abuse and loneliness, and it is a barrier to education and employment. Therefore, we want more vulnerable Copenhageners to be assigned a home of their own, and that they are supported to maintain this (CBSW, p.7).

Here, homelessness is cast as a *social problem* that intensifies an already difficult living situation, signaling that the "homeless problem" entails *additional difficulties to that of lacking adequate housing.* This is a representation in line with what comparative policy studies on national-level have suggested, namely that in social democratic regimes "homelessness is to a greater extent concentrated among people with complex social problems" (Benjaminsen *et al.*, 2009, p.43). While structural obstacles are mentioned (limited access to education and labour market), when attending to the linguistic details of the excerpt, the additional problems stated (such as substance abuse and loneliness) all come with negative connotations and are individual in nature. The phrasing "a messy economy" might be read as individually orientated in that it signals a personal inability to handle money in a proper way (as opposed to "poverty" that could shift focus to more structural issues). The final utterance, "that they are supported to maintain this", implicitly positions homeless individuals as needing help not only to access, but also to maintain housing, indirectly producing *"the homeless" as the problem*. Accordingly, housing might be an essential, but not in itself sufficient, measure to live a normal, independent life. This way of representing homelessness draws on and reproduces culturally dominant, stigmatized images of homeless people as uneducated, anti-social "addicts", unable to manage their economy and, perhaps, unable to take responsibility of their own lives (Juhila, 2004). As noted by previous scholars, underpinning such a characterization is an individualizing, neo-liberal discourse that emphasizes the role of personal deficits and individual failure, rather than structural issues related to economy (such as housing policy, low pay or under-employment) and unequal distribution of resources (Lyon-Callo, 2004; Pantazis, 2016).

"Community" and "fellowship" are two frequently occurring concepts in the Copenhagen policies, which both seem to build on the basic idea that social "inclusive" interventions not only could, but also should, lead to a normalization of

individual lives. This normalized position translates to living as independent a life as possible and again "be included in society through education and employment, relations with family and friends, with an active leisure lifestyle" (SSC, p.4; CBSW, p.3). This representation of a "normal" and desirable life echoes Western middle-class values and may be placed within a wider neoliberal discourse of workfare. This discourse conceals the fact that for many, wage labour is a source of stress, poor health, and little time for family and leisure (Pantazis, 2016). Urban welfare policy in Copenhagen has previously been described as having a "participatory-empowering" orientation, following an underpinning rationale of social inclusion in order to solve the "problem" of social exclusion (Andersen and Elm-Larsen, 2003). The next excerpt highlights the close conceptual connection between the Copenhagen texts and contemporary EU policy vocabulary of social exclusion.

> It strengthens people's identities to be part of a community, where you contribute something positive to others, have friends, acquaintances and colleagues, and where you can get the feeling of being like everyone else. (…) That is why Copenhagen will open up, so vulnerable Copenhageners and disabled Copenhageners can be a part of the city's communities (SSC, p.4-5).

Within the EU policy discourse of social exclusion, exclusion is most often conceptualized as "a static position or condition mainly characterized by being located outside of the labour market, occupied by a homogenous group of 'others', for social workers to assess, monitor and transform" (Davidsson and Petersson, 2017, p.7). Ideas about personal development and "including" interventions at a micro-level are intimately linked to this notion of exclusion, while less attention is given to excluding actors, structural determinants (such as high unemployment rates or employer discrimination), or potential power hierarchies and inequalities among the supposedly included (Peace, 2001; Petersson and Davidsson, 2016). Drawing on Nikolas Rose's (2000) work, the particular form of inclusion implied in the excerpt above may also be read as attempts to govern and control people. Rose argues that contemporary control strategies work through binding people to particular communities of morality. Individual conduct and obedience are regulated by "binding individuals into shared moral norms and values: governing through the self-steering forces of honour and shame, of propriety, obligation, trust, fidelity, and commitment to others" (ibid., p.324). In contrast to being governed by others, then, individuals are now governing themselves through their commitments to communities.

Returning to people categories, there is a prominent "them and us" approach in the texts, where "vulnerable" and "disabled" Copenhageners are consistently being constituted as the Others. While often mentioned together, these categories are simultaneously constructed as binary target groups, as in the following passage:

> All people possess some form of resources and skills – including people with social problems or disabilities. This might include the vulnerable parent, who finds it difficult to structure the daily life of one's child, but is good at caring and playing with the child, or the disabled person, who is sweet and kind and want to help others (SSC, p.19).

Besides illustrating the tendency of Othering in the retrieved documents, this quote also reveals how people categories may be rooted in gendered and ableist notions of normality. The expectation attached to the parent position ("good at caring and playing with the child") is consistent with conventional gender norms and the "emphasized femininity" western women are expected to display (Connell, 1987). The assertion regarding people with disabilities ("sweet and kind and want to help others") aligns with stereotypical patronizing and romanticized attitudes often highlighted and criticized by critical disability scholars (e.g., Loja *et al.*, 2013). In addition to the distinction between "vulnerable" as opposed to "disabled", the category of "vulnerable Copenhageners" is also bifurcatory. When attending to policy recommendations regarding interventions, two sub-categories emerge: those considered able and willing to "develop themselves to the extent that they can no longer be characterized as socially vulnerable", for which efforts should focus education, employment and independent housing. For those considered unable or unwilling to change though, life quality is described as having a "stable framework for their lives" and getting the basic needs attended to. For this latter, "un-willing" category, social support is consequently reduced to harm reduction measures. This is similar to what Järvinen and Andersen (2009) describe as a principal dilemma in the "formula story of harm reduction" within outpatient treatment centers for people addicted to opiates: the question of "change" versus "stabilization" as guiding treatment principle. The stabilization-oriented work carried out at the centers rests on notions about heroin addiction as an incurable, "chronic" state. However, this conflicts with the change-oriented expectations of those participants who have goals of becoming drug-free and do not identify with the character of the "chronic addict". Furthermore, underpinning the binary split of "vulnerable Copenhageners" into "willing" versus "unwilling" is the division between "the deserving", on the one hand, and "the undeserving" on the other, a longstanding split that the use of binaries here has the effect of reproducing (Meeuwisse, 2008). The implicit assumption here appears to be that some homeless peoples' inability or unwillingness to exhibit the anticipated self-changing behaviors is the root cause of their homelessness, mirroring a discourse of empowerment and providing the rationale for addressing unruly individuals problem of "non-self development" with decreased social support and increased control measures (Mik-Meyer, 2004).

Left out of these local representations of "the homeless" are the binary oppositions to the frequently used categories "Copenhageners" and "Danes": homeless migrants and failed asylum seekers who stay in the city but lack citizenship, permanent residence permit or the right to reside in Denmark. This discursive silence might have many plausible reasons. However, it is nevertheless noteworthy since it effectively conceals the fact that homeless migrants comprise a part of the city´s growing number of rough sleepers (Projekt Udenfor, 2012). Given that agencies such as the Copenhagen Board of Social Welfare can be expected to have a comprehensive picture of the homelessness situation in the city, omitting this category of homeless people could very well be interpreted as a "manipulative silence" (Huckin, 2002), an example of governing through taking discursive control over categorisations in homeless policies (Sahlin, 2004).

Glasgow

The key outcome guiding both Glasgow strategies is that "[h]omelessness is prevented and if not prevented, is addressed effectively through improved service delivery". In line with the Scottish national homeless plan, prevention is given a lot of attention. One priority action to be put in place is a "Homelessness Prevention Mediation Service". This is motivated with reference to "the main" cause of the issue at hand (GPHS, p.23): "friends or family being no longer willing to accommodate. Mediation, with its focus upon the rebuilding of relationships, has a role in preventing homelessness". The implicit problem representation here seems to be that *homelessness is a family problem*, and the solution becomes to assist housed family members and their homeless kin in repairing (presumably) damaged relations, so the family once again can take their housing responsibility towards their estranged member. In situations where homelessness has not been prevented, "improved service delivery" is the prescribed solution, indicating an additional problem representation: *homelessness constitutes a welfare problem.* Subsequently, people experiencing homelessness should be assisted through social interventions. This framing implicitly positions homeless people as in need of not only housing but of social support and services, which deviates from the rights-based, housing-led approach often associated with the Scottish attitude to homelessness.

Another prominent way of characterizing the "homeless problem" in the Glasgow strategies is as an *increasing, economic problem for the City Council*. This representation is consistently highlighted in the texts through wordings such as "tight financial constraints", "within a framework of very limited resources", "severe cuts in public spending", and the need for "better use made of resources". The failure of the UK government to provide appropriate economic means is identified as an endemic problem and a root cause for the growing levels of homelessness in the city.

> The UK Government is in the process of delivering major changes to the welfare benefit system (…) These changes will have significant implications for service users in terms of how benefits will be delivered, and will also mean that claimants may have significantly less money to live on" (ibid., p.8).

Underpinning this characterization is an idea of *homelessness as a structural problem* with political and economic roots. However, what is also illustrated in the excerpt, the underlying causes seem primarily to be related to the UK government and "emerging pressures flowing from Welfare Reform" (ibid., p.26), and not to the prevailing economic system. The City Council's strained economy is put forward as the main reason for the "pressures on the supply of settled accommodation" (ibid., p.28). Both Glasgow documents have adopted a strong market-oriented language, expressed through statements such as "deliver high quality services", "stakeholders deliver", "cost effectiveness", and "balancing supply and demands in terms of homelessness and housing". Partnership is an additional strong theme, not least with the voluntary and private sector, and homeless individuals are often described in market-oriented terms such as "customers" or "service users". Elements of the empowerment discourse identified in the Copenhagen texts are present also in the Glasgow strategies, visible in phrasings like "allow people to maximize their full potential" (GPHS, p.22), but to a much smaller extent. Potentially stigmatizing statements regarding the character of homeless households are rare, and the depicted needs of "people affected by homelessness" tend to be modified through structurally oriented explanations, such as "due to the effects of homelessness". People experiencing homelessness are often described in a de-stigmatizing language, like in the following excerpt.

> At different points in people's lives, personal, work, and family situations will change and a different kind of housing solution might be needed. Everybody could find themselves in a situation where they no longer have a permanent home and need support to find somewhere to live. Sometimes, getting information on what options are available can seem difficult. The range of options can be numerous particularly given the diversity of Glasgow's housing system. The type of housing support and number of agencies can be overwhelming (GHS, p.32).

A possible interpretation of the quote could be that it reflects the national statutory rights-based approach and a housing-led understanding of the homeless problem. The implicit problem representation here seems to be that *homelessness is a consequence of the prevailing housing system* in the city, indicating a structural understanding of the issue at hand. This portrayal is also present in statements such as "the nature of rough sleeping within the City is related to the pressures on temporary and settled accommodation" (GPHS, p.16). Nevertheless, my analysis shows that alongside discourses that focuses on structural causes of homeless-

ness, sits an individualizing discourse centered on personal problems and pathology. An illustrative example of this is the next excerpt where the underlying causes of homelessness is described yet again.

> The root causes of homelessness are complex and varied, and can relate to both structural and individual factors. Homeless households often have multiple and complex needs and require a range of support services from different agencies, which need to work well together. This can include support with a range of issues including mental, physical, and sexual health, drug and alcohol dependency, behavioural problems, daily living skills, employability, and development of social networks (GHS, p.15).

In the quote, the diversity among homeless people is highlighted and the "root causes" of the problem is linked to structural as well as individual factors. However, when specifying homeless households' "multiple and complex" needs, structural issues disappear and the "homeless problem" becomes destructurated. All of the issues or needs mentioned (mental, physical and sexual health, behavioural problems, employability etc.) are individual in nature, producing the *homeless individual as the problem*. This is more in line with what Lyon-Callo (2004) refers to as an individualizing medicalized discourse on homelessness, rather than the structurally-oriented housing-led approach advocated in the national strategy plan. Also, the GPHS's strong focus on "the most marginalised" groups, and increasing social interventions to address the "problem" is quite in keeping with characteristics of homeless strategies in social democratic regimes (Benjaminsen *et al.*, 2009, p.45).

The fact that priority need was abolished by 2012 in Scotland does not mean that categorization and ranking of homeless people is not taking place in the retrieved texts. For example, a guiding principle put forward in the GHS is "Equality and fairness" which is explicitly linked to the national legislation on this matter. However, in the subsequent text there seems to be some confusion between adhering to statutory protected grounds of discrimination (i.e. eliminating from decisions concerns based on gender, race etc.), and taking affirmative action, i.e. giving disadvantaged groups priority status in relation to access to housing.

> Glasgow City Council is committed to ensuring that its policies and services meet the diverse needs of the Communities it serves. In doing this, GHS will prioritise the following groups: disabled people; people from black and minority ethnic groups (including gypsy travellers, asylum seekers and refugees); women; lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender people; older people (those over 60) and younger people; faith (religious and belief) communities (GHS, p.8).

Although different forms of inequalities are described together in the excerpt, social locations (like disability and gender) are presented as separate "sub-groups". This may be in line with statutory discrimination criteria, but lacks attentiveness to how diverse forms of inequalities may interact or link to oppressive structures (such as racism, heterosexism, homophobia and xenophobia). Another way of thinking about discrimination is that people might be discriminated on more than one ground, or simultaneously discriminated on several axes of inequality, such as gender, age and race, either at the same time or at different occasions (Crenshaw, 1991). In addition, there is a lack of empirical evidence in the GHS to support this selection of priority groups. Many of the inequalities mentioned in the excerpt seem to have little influence on a person's ability to access and sustain housing on the regular housing market, at least if put in relation to factors such as unemployment, history of substance abuse, and poverty. Apart from the section on equality quoted above, however, different homeless populations and corresponding social interventions are most often described in a manner devoid of gender, class, age, sexual orientation, etc. One exception is when discussing the role of the private rented sector in meeting housing needs. For instance, a key action during the current GHS period is to develop "the use of private rented housing (…) for *some homeless* households" (ibid., p.36, author's emphasis).

> The private rented sector plays an important role in meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse range of households including students, young workers, new migrants to the city and new families who aspire to home ownership but cannot access mortgages.

Here, diversity is connected to a variety of social locations that share mainly two characteristics: low-income and a temporary position. Class and age are implicitly drawn upon when defining what kind of homeless households that are considered suitable for housing in the private rented sector. Reflecting on who is included and who is left out of this picture, most of the priority groups mentioned above are excluded, as well as the significant proportion of the homeless population – single, unemployed men – depending on social welfare payments for their income.

Similarly to the Copenhagen policies, categorization and classification of homeless people is done primarily in relation to estimated degree of personal *vulnerability*, a term that is presented as self-evident and hence not defined. For example, it is stated that "people who use homeless services are some of the most vulnerable people in our City" (GPHS, p.22). Vulnerability is also mentioned in connection to "multiply excluded homeless", "people with complex need", "service users", "service users who frequent the City Center", and "the City Center homeless population". People associated with any of these homeless categories are said to share in common a variety of health, social care and housing needs. Still, they have little contact with

homeless services in the city, a problem attributed to deficits in current arrangements of the support system. A key objective of "the City-Centre Partnership" is therefore "to work with those most excluded service users in order that they can access a holistic package of support" (ibid., p.28). The underlying problem representation here seems to be that *homelessness is a result of system failure.* This framing of the problem is also implied in the description of the target group "prison leavers", an unmarked category in terms of gender, class, race/origin, sexuality etc., whose needs are to be more effectively attended to through "improve[d] partnership" (ibid., p. 26). Here, the underlying cause for homelessness is described as "at times, a consequence of a lack of coordinated support". On the one hand, this framing puts focus on the inadequate system and not on the individual "prison leaver". On the other hand, it obscures the role of structural problems and local systems regarding production and distribution of housing, i.e. barriers to access to housing that has to do with landlords right to hand-pick/choose their tenants.

While the lack of a clear definition of the term "complex needs" is noted in the GPHS, it is still used to designate "single men aged between 25 and 59 years (…) with drug or alcohol problems, poor mental health, and involvement in the criminal justice system" (ibid., p.15). Furthermore, it is stated that "the profile of rough sleepers is of single, relatively young men" (ibid., p.16). Yet, in the key objectives stated for the period of the strategy, the single, adult male with a history of substance abuse and criminality is not explicitly put forward as a priority category, at least not to the extent that he is to be exempted from certain accommodation alternatives. The only categories singled out as in need to be excepted from certain housing arrangements (more specifically, bed and breakfast accommodation) are pregnant women and children (ibid., p.18). Although gender is verbally marked in relation to pregnancy, women as a group are not positioned as vulnerable, or as a target population, in the Glasgow texts. In addition, there is a near total discursive silence regarding rejected asylum seekers and poor EU migrants. Contrary to "new migrants to the city" (a category considered suitable for housing in the private rented sector), it is stated that "people whose claim for asylum has been refused and certain EU migrants are likely to increase pressure on the HSCP [Health and Social Care Partnership] and undermine our attempts to end the need to sleep rough" (ibid., p.20). This articulation positions refugees and migrants who lack housing discursively as homeless with differential needs, closely related to their legal status, creating a hierarchy of deserving versus undeserving.

Gothenburg

As Sweden lacks a national homeless policy, Gothenburg City Council's four-year local strategy and action plan (HSG), constitute a key policy document representing current priorities and key actions to be taken on the local homelessness field. Unlike the other cities' broader housing approach, the HSG (like the GPHS) is target-specific. Guided by an ambitious "zero vision on ending homelessness" its purpose is to provide an overall description of how the city will work to reduce homelessness until 2018. A central distinction made is between the categories "homeless" and "houseless". Similar to the other two cities, simply lacking accommodation does not qualify a person as "homeless". To be categorized eligible, there is a need for additional social problems. Excluding "houseless" from the HSG is legitimized with reference to the national Social Service Act, according to which there is no legal responsibility for municipalities to act as housing authorities. The need of rationing with limited recourses provides an additional account for this representation of the "real" homeless: "If the social services would have to solve the housing situation for people who do not belong to the target group, this risks taking resources from the work with the most vulnerable individuals" (HSG, p.8). On the whole, cost-effectiveness and reduced public costs appear as superordinate policy goals when looking at the policy aims and recommended interventions, casting the "homeless problem" as *an economic problem for the City Council*, in line with the Glasgow strategies.

Like Copenhagen and Glasgow, the "most vulnerable" homeless is a frequently appearing category that is never clearly defined, but used to refer to a variety of situations and groups. Echoing the diversity discourse of homelessness (Kingfisher, 2007), the HSG states that the current homeless population in the city constitutes a diverse group that exhibits a broad range of needs. Homeless "single middle-age men with drug problems" (HSG, p.6) of the 1980s is no longer to be in focus for policy efforts. Instead, street level work in implementing the policy goals is to be characterized by an "awareness of different perspectives such as gender, age, physical ability and LGBT" (ibid., p.22). The HSG frequently stresses the importance of attending to gender equality when addressing homelessness. This implies that the "homeless problem" has to do with *gender inequality* that the policy wants to address. Although the Gothenburg text recognizes that single, adult men make up the large majority of the homeless population in the city, men are never mentioned as a category in need of special attention. Instead, "homeless women" are singled out as a particularly vulnerable group whose needs must be attended to, but exactly what homeless women are vulnerable to, or what these needs consist of, is not made clear. This signals a problem representation that aligns with dominant national discourses of Sweden as a gender-equal state. In keeping with this orientation, when (in)equality is targeted in the strategy's key actions, the big diversity in the

homeless population stressed initially in the HSG is reduced to a matter of women lacking the same opportunities as men. For example, the key action "[i]nvestigate the need for gender-specific accommodation" rests on the assumption that "[w]omen and men subjected to honor-related violence or domestic violence compose a particularly vulnerable group in need of attention". However, when specifying the planned stocktake of the city's current housing supply, gender-specific housing admittedly refers to "particularly vulnerable *women* with psychiatric problems and/or substance abuse" (ibid., p.29, author's emphasis). This framing of "gender-specific housing" is clearly gendering in its effects, privileging women over men. The distinction made between "honor-related or domestic violence" is also raced, in this context, as the term "honor-related" is a clear reference to male violence perpetrated by immigrants (Balkmar *et al.*, 2008).

Similar to Glasgow, the HSG initially uses a structural language when framing the "homeless problem", which is explicitly described as "one of the most extreme forms of poverty and misery" with "many and complicated" underlying causes (HSG, p.3). Both individual measures and structural changes in housing provision are needed to "meet the various housing needs among homeless people". At the outset, the problem of homelessness is discussed in a human rights vocabulary, for example the statement "[e]veryone should have the same opportunities to live a good life in Gothenburg". The importance of focusing on the needs of children is recurrently mentioned, implying that homelessness is connected to *lack of attention to children's needs*. "Taking a child perspective" is stressed as crucial since "[t]he effects of homelessness are worst for children as they do not have the possibility to change their own situation". This seemingly neutral statement entails an implicit moral dimension in that it positions adults as a uniform category of rational decision makers that should be able to take responsibility of their lives, especially if they have children. Children, on the other hand, are positioned as weak and without agency, thus reproducing the generational order. Left out in this representation of the problem are the systemic and structurally dictated inequalities (e.g., unemployment, low pay, current housing regulation, structural housing discrimination, power of landlords etc.) that severely restrict many parents' possibilities to change a problematic housing situation. In what follows, the human rights vocabulary is abruptly circumscribed by the unadorned declaration that "[p]eople who do not hold a residence permit or the right to reside (for EU citizens) in Sweden are not covered by this strategy". This excludes the more than 200 EU migrants, mainly poor Roma people from Eastern Europe, sleeping rough in the city – and whom in some cases are accompanied by children – from the city's homeless interventions (Gothenburg City Mission, 2014). Under a separate heading, the growing number of "socially and economically vulnerable EU-citizens" begging and sleeping rough in the city is specifically addressed. In this section of the HSG, two separate

accounts are given to why this exclusion takes place. First, references are made to the prevailing statutory framework: homeless EU citizens who lack right to reside in Sweden are not covered by the Social Services Act, hence they cannot make use of the city's homeless support services. Second, the issue of EU migrants sleeping rough is redefined as not primarily a housing problem:

> Unlike other homeless, vulnerable mobile EU citizens homelessness is not as clearly a housing policy issue. It has a strong connection to labor market policy and other policy areas such as immigration and foreign policy (…) EU citizens staying in Sweden are not a homogenous group, but they have in common that they come to find work and better livelihoods" (HSG, p.18).

In this passage, homeless EU migrants in the city who lack local connection are constructed as not primarily a housing issue, but a *labour market and immigration problem*. This implicitly places the responsibility for solving the "problem" on the national governmental authorities responsible for these issues. Subsequently, it is possible for local authorities not to take any specific action for this category. It is worth noting that when a homeless person is marked as a "vulnerable EU citizen", age and gender are rendered irrelevant. Interesting is also the last sentence of the excerpt ("they come to find work and better livelihoods"), as it suggests underlying assumptions supporting this problem representation. Despite the initial disclaimer that "EU citizens" does not constitute a "homogenous group", the subsequent utterance "they come to find work and better livelihoods" still positions them as a uniform category of rational decision-makers, residing within Swedish territory on legally and economically dubious grounds. Hence, they can also be held responsible for their actions. Not considered in this problem representation is the fact that the category "vulnerable EU citizen" to a high extent signifies poor Roma people, a population facing severe housing and labour market disadvantages and persisting structural discrimination, prejudice and intolerance in their native countries (FRA, 2014). The long history of negative stereotypes, persecution and exclusion of Roma in Sweden, as elsewhere, is not acknowledged. I would argue that *vulnerable EU citizen* has become code for *Roma* in the HSG, a sort of euphemism that allow speakers to make racial references without overtly doing so. This conceptual shift in the HSG could be interpreted as an instance of structural discrimination (Pager and Shepherd, 2008), as it conceals not only generations of oppression and repression against Roma, but also obscures the highly precarious life situation and accelerating pattern of violence these people face in their countries of origin (see also Curran, 2016).

Discussion

In this paper I have explored local representations of homelessness and "the homeless" in three European cities' policies and action plans in this area. The cross-city analysis reveals similarities as well as incongruences. There is a shared conception with regards to collaboration and forming partnerships with market players and NGO's as appropriate means by which to achieve set goals (findings in line with Benjaminsen *et al.*, 2009). While a variety of local understandings of the "problem" could be identified, my analysis shows that market-based and individualized notions of underlying causes of homelessness are reflected and reproduced across all cities, although to various degrees. The Glasgow strategies' stands out as they articulate more structurally oriented discourses, and display a less morally value-laden vocabulary when describing both homelessness and homeless people.

Still, a common theme across the three cities is that alongside structurally oriented discourses that addresses the shortage of affordable housing and a tightening fiscal climate, sits a neoliberal individualizing discourse that disregards political economic causes related to homelessness (such as the local distribution of wealth or the cost and availability of local housing). Instead, the current economic and systemic order is taken as a given, and it is implicitly understood that little can be done about prevailing housing practices. Discussions and decisions regarding more structural factors, such as the production and distribution of affordable housing, do not take place. Taking Glasgow as example, the critique of UK welfare reforms and cuts in benefits might very well be legitimate. Still, the power of landlords (registered as well as private), and the current housing distribution system is never challenged. Neither are factors like NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) (Dear, 1992), or persistent racial housing discrimination (Pager and Shepherd, 2008) attended to. As been pointed out by Lyon-Callo (2004), failing to address systemic and discursive inequities does little to eliminate homelessness. Instead, the homeless individual becomes the logic focus for attention and policy efforts. In a similar manner, current system inequalities related to class, gender or nationality/origin in the local settings are left outside the local homeless representations. The intersectionality-informed element of my analysis revealed diverging logics based on origin/race, gender, class and age underpinning the local-level policies. For instance, a pattern in practice of categorizing "the homeless" across cities was the binary split between nationals and aliens. Left out here are refugees and homeless migrants who lack citizenship, permanent residence permit or the right to reside. Through a process of demarcation and othering, these persons are consistently being constructed as a homogenous, "undeserving" category of Others based on race and nation. Bak Jørgensen's (2012) study of integration policy making at city level highlights that in a welfare system based on mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion, categorizations that separate priority/deserving

groups from non-priority/undeserving risk reinforcing unequal power hierarchies, and legitimize more restrictive measures and repressive sanctions aimed at the undeserving. Contrary to the Copenhagen texts, homeless EU migrants are explicitly discussed in the Gothenburg strategy. However, their situation is defined as not primarily a housing issue but rather a labour market and/or immigration problem. Such a construction places the responsibility for solving the "problem" on the governmental authorities responsible for employment and immigration issues; therefore, the exclusion of this group of homeless people from the "homeless" category targeted in the local strategy can be justified.

The importance of cost-effectiveness and reduced public expenses appears as an overarching goal across the cities, and as noted by Baptista, Benjaminsen and Pleace (2015, p.60), "when money becomes tight, strict local connection rules are a way to manage demand". My point here is that efforts to create affordable housing might do little for those whose legal status does not match the official prototype of "homeless". Clearly, issues like nationality and citizenship are national affairs and municipalities have little influence over such matters. Nevertheless, a newcomer's permanent residence is granted based on an evaluation made by the local authority where the person in question lives, so there is room for different strategies and interpretations (Bak Jørgensen, 2012).

Conclusion

In sum, there are similarities but also noticeable differences between the conceptual logics underpinning problem framings at local city level. A term frequently used across all cities to label priority groups of homeless people was that of "vulnerable", a concept that is by no means self-evident since there is no shared universal meaning of what it comprises. However, in the local policies analyzed the concept was more often treated as a self-evident given than clearly defined. Typically, it was used to signify a multiplicity of problems in addition to lack of housing. Across the three cities different conceptualizations tend to touch upon similar themes, of which some denote macro-level phenomena (unemployment, poverty, etc.), while others indicate problems on an individual level (substance abuse, loneliness). This lack of conceptual clarity results in a confusing picture of what local efforts to tackle homelessness might actually target.[9]

[9] A parallel can be drawn to the policy concept "social exclusion" whose transformation from a policy-verb used in the 1980s EU poverty programs, to a hallmark-noun in the 1990s UK New Labour discourse has been subjected to extensive critique and discussion (e.g., Silver, 1994).

While the Copenhagen strategies do not ignore the contexts of peoples' lives, social locations like gender, race and class are just not attended to. In contrast, the Glasgow and Gothenburg policies explicitly focus on promoting equality and non-discrimination towards a range of "priority groups" (women, LGBT people etc.), seemingly adopting what Cruells and Coll-Planas (2013) refer to as a "minoritizing perspective" on discrimination. This term denotes the tendency within European LGBT public polices to treat discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation as an isolated phenomenon. Consequently, the focus is directed towards the effects of inequality for individual women, LBGT people, etc., rather than underlying causes and structural dimensions of discrimination. According to Cruells and Coll-Planas, a consequence of this is that socially constructed categories turn into "real" target groups, "without questioning the fact that the very existence of this group is the product of social structures which set up predetermined divisions and hierarchies between bodies, genders and sexualities" (ibid., p.134).

When examining stated policy goals and suggested measures, neither Glasgow nor Gothenburg pay attention to intersections of inequalities, or how these may interact. Instead, the proposed social interventions presented are in line with binary categories of nationals and aliens, men and women, houseless and homeless, adults and children. The default category of "the homeless" tends to be constituted as specifically gendered (male) and racialised/raced (white), while "homeless women" are singled out and read through a victimization lens (i.e., as specifically vulnerable and in need of targeted interventions). However, as pointed out by Fitzpatrick (2012) the idea of women being more vulnerable to homelessness has no support in empirical data. On the contrary, in most Western countries women seem to be *less* at risk of homelessness than men. Even so, in many countries homeless men are clearly disadvantaged in relation to their female counterparts (especially single mothers) when it comes to housing provision. This conflicts with the notion that a combination of social positions such as "single motherhood", "immigrant", and "women" increases the risk of homelessness (Nordfeldt, 2012). To conclude, a dilemma rising out of the analysis here undertaken is that the broad, intersectional-blind approach identified in the Copenhagen texts risks missing special needs in homeless populations. At the same time, a dispersing of the homeless population in a wide array of separate categories (all with specific characteristics and special needs), I argue, risks obscuring the economic and systemic structures that generate homelessness. Such a categorical approach to social positions conceals similarities between homeless populations and their potential shared relationship to power (see Hankivsky *et al.*, 2012). Rather than thinking of categories as additive or isolated, the intersectional approach taken here illustrates the importance of conceptualizing categories as fluid, mutually constituted and inextricably linked to structural hierarchies of power (such as racism) (Holley *et al.*, 2016).

While the analysis in this article has suggested some new insights, it also has limitations. Apart from the fact that the study only captures a snapshot in time, one can obviously not assume that ideas expressed in policy texts mirror those implemented in local practices. We know from previous studies that policies are not simply translated in a linear way, as originally designed. More work needs to be done to explore the potential impact of different policies on local delivery of homeless services. Future studies would also benefit from mixing different data types to probe deeper into the claims that arise from this initial study.

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Responses

Part B

Response to Guy Johnson and Nicholas Pleace's article 'How Do We Measure Success in Homelessness Services? : Critically Assessing the Rise of the Homelessness Outcomes Star'

Joy MacKeith

Triangle, Hove, UK

Introduction

In their article in the June 2016 edition of this journal, Johnson and Pleace articulate a number of critiques of the Homelessness Outcomes Star (HOS) on grounds ranging from its theoretical underpinnings to the supporting research and guidance for use. However, it is important to note that the authors have themselves not used the tool with service users or received training in the use of the tool. Nor have they carried out any primary research on the use of the tool by service users, workers, managers or commissioners. Their article is based on a literature review and their own opinions. Unfortunately, this has led to a number of important misunderstandings relating to the tool and how it is used, and as a result the analysis and conclusions reached are fundamentally flawed. The purpose of this response is to highlight and correct those misunderstandings.

The Star Does Not Pre-determine Service User Goals

Johnson and Pleace argue that because the HOS consists of a number of pre-determined outcome areas (the outcome domains which form the points on the Star), it is paternalistic and does not allow individuals to set their own goals. In fact, an intrinsic part of the tool is an Action Planning table which the person and their worker use to jointly identify and agree the specific goals they wish to achieve and the steps to take towards them. The outcome areas were chosen following extensive consulta-

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tion and piloting with practitioners and service users in over 15 organisations over a three-year period. These areas provide a framework for the conversation about goals, helping to ensure that all key areas of life are covered but not pre-determining what individual goals should be in each of those areas. The Journey of Change and scales provide a structure for thinking about progress and some objectivity in measuring it, but a lot of care is taken to ensure that the definitions are broad enough to allow for a wide range of needs and preferences. For example, in the Meaningful Use of Time domain, 10 on the scale means "You are engaged in regular activities that work for you". This is hardly a call to become an "economically productive and socially engaged consumer" as Johnson and Pleace imply (p.37).

The Star Is Not Based on an Individual Pathology Analysis

Johnson and Pleace claim that because the Star focuses on individual agency, it denies the importance of structural factors such as poverty, disadvantage and inequality in the creation of homelessness. In fact, they go further to argue that the HOS is built on an understanding of homelessness that puts individual pathology at the centre. This analysis confuses causes and solutions.

Our understanding is that at a societal level homelessness is indeed the result of a complex set of social factors including poverty, disadvantage and lack of affordable housing which impact on individual circumstances and capabilities in complex and varied ways. However, for the individual who is now homeless, and who is in receipt of a support service aimed at enabling them to find and sustain a tenancy, the key task at hand is to address the barriers to that happening. As Johnson and Pleace themselves acknowledge (p.44) many homeless people do face barriers to permanent housing beyond the lack of suitable accommodation. Without addressing these barriers, housing solutions are likely to be short-lived. The Star is designed to be used with people who have complex and multiple needs to support them and their worker to create positive change in their lives because that is what the person wants and what the worker is employed to do. Of course it is also important to highlight and address the wider structural factors, but that is a different task requiring different skills and tools.

We do understand the point that is being made, that there is a danger that by focusing on individual agency people feel pathologised. However, extensive piloting of the tool in service delivery settings through a three year development process, followed by ten years of training and supporting people to use the tool, has shown that in the contexts in which the Star is used the focus on individual empowerment is not taken to imply that the individual is in some way at fault. Whilst workers and service users are often sceptical of a new tool and wary of 'putting people in boxes',

once they try the Star in practice the vast majority are engaged and excited by the way in which it supports conversations, gives an overview and highlights change. They do not mistake the focus on individual agency for a diagnosis of individual pathology. The articles cited by Johnson and Pleace (including Peterson *et al.,* 2014 and Harris and Andrews, 2013) make this very clear. For example, Harris and Andrews conclude that the Star gives service users "the opportunity to define their own reality" and "identify their own priorities" (Harris and Andrews 2013, p.2). However, Johnson and Pleace seem to dismiss this independent, empirical research as simply "presenting" the Star as an effective tool (p.37) as if these authors were interested parties marketing the tool rather than independent researchers drawing their own conclusions.

The Star Is a Holistic Tool and the Scales Should Not Be Used in Isolation

Johnson and Pleace look in some detail at the 'Managing Tenancy and Accommodation' scale and its focus on complying with rules and regulations in order to maintain a tenancy. They critique the scale because it paints an image of homeless people "as individuals who have to be made 'housing ready'" arguing that the issues facing homeless people are much more wide-ranging including "boredom, isolation and needs for treatment" rather than just an inability to keep to the rules. This Star fully recognises these needs in the other scales including those on Meaningful Use of Time, Social Networks, Managing Mental Health, and Drugs and Alcohol. The point of the Star is that it aims to identify all possible areas of needs and support conversation and measurement on each. In fact every effort is made not to duplicate issues between the scales because this would lead to item redundancy in the psychometrics and unhelpful repetition for the service users. It is a holistic tool and must be critiqued as a whole. It is not very meaningful to take one of the scales in isolation and argue that issues covered in other scales are ignored. Furthermore, it is the case that for some people who are homeless, not complying with the terms of their tenancy is an issue which puts them at risk of homelessness or limits their ability to progress to more secure forms of accommodation. Including this possibility within the Star does not imply that this is an issue for all homeless people. Part of the strength of the tool is that it allows workers and service users to create a nuanced picture of the domains in which needs exist, what those needs are and how the person is engaging with those needs.

In addition to the above, we do see the need to acknowledge within this scale that the individual may be 'housing ready' but not housed due to lack of available accommodation. This is recognised at scale point 8 which states 'You are able to live in your own place and maintain a tenancy with support, though you may either

be in your own flat or waiting for a flat at this point'. However, the distinction between whether housing is available and whether support is needed could be clearer in this scale. In versions of the Star published more recently, such as the Family Star Plus, this distinction is drawn out more clearly.

The Star Is Not a Self-completion Tool

The HOS is not designed as a self-completion tool as stated by Johnson and Pleace. This is a fundamental and rather surprising misunderstanding given that much is made of the Star's innovative collaborative completion approach in the documents that Johnson and Pleace cite including MacKeith (2011) and Burns *et al*. (2013). Unlike conventional approaches which focus either on the service user perspective (self-completion tools) or the professional perspective (expert tools), the Outcomes Star aims to bring together both perspectives through dialogue to create a more rounded assessment. This overcomes some of the difficulties of self-assessment which Johnson and Pleace highlight (p.43) and also the difficulties of expert assessment which does not sufficiently take into account what matters to the service user or draw on their understanding of their situation. However, this collaborative approach does bring its own challenges, one of which is that because it is a new approach, there are no established criteria for determining the reliability of this kind of tool. This is one of the reasons why, as Johnson and Pleace correctly point out, information about the psychometric properties of the tool has lagged behind its use. This is an issue that we are actively engaged in addressing and substantial progress has been made. Independent studies carried out by Bailey and Kerlin (2015), Battrick, HIlbery and Holloway (2013), Smyth (2014) and Maquire, Johnson, Vostanis and Keats (2010) all report that the HOS showed responsiveness to change. Secondary analysis of the data collected in an independent study that used the HOS alongside another tool showed convergent validity with two other measures. An analysis of HOS data on the Star Online carried out for internal purposes has shown that the HOS has a unidimensional factor structure, good internal consistency, no item redundancy and is responsive to change. Following further testing on inter-rater reliability, these results will be published later this year. An article on the psychometric properties of the most used version of the Star, the Family Star Plus, is now completed and will be published soon.

However, whilst Johnson and Pleace are right to highlight the importance of validation, their analysis reveals a lack of understanding of how the different metrics work. On the one hand, they state that the tool is a self-completion tool, and on the other they quote Killaspy *et al.* (2012) who mis-used the tool as an expert-completion tool and unsurprisingly identified inter-rater reliability issues. Inter-rater reliability is not a relevant concept for self-completion tools as there are no expert 'raters'.

HOS Data Is Meaningful for Service Users, Workers and Managers

Johnson and Pleace question whether the data collected by the HOS is meaningful. Firstly, they argue that the delineation between different stages is not clear and for this reason the data is not meaningful (p.40). We would agree that the Journey of Change and the individual scales are a simplification of a complex reality. However, that does not mean that they do not have utility or that the data collected is not meaningful. Any kind of data collection is ultimately a simplification – the trick is to simplify enough to provide a means of engaging with the complexity but not so much that the meaning and dynamics of the real world are lost. We have always argued that Star data is useful but have never implied that it would give final answers or that it is in itself sufficient information for assessing service effectiveness (Triangle, 2015).

Secondly, they argue that aggregating the readings across all 10 domains of the HOS gives a figure that is difficult to interpret. This is a good point and one which has become more and more evident as Triangle has worked with organisations to support them to draw meaning from their Star data. Whilst we do still use the overall mean as a way of making simple comparisons, the emphasis has now moved to analyses that focus on individual domains and movement between stages on the Journey of Change. Here, the meaning of the numbers is very evident; if 50 service users had a drug or alcohol problem that they were not willing to talk about (i.e. at 1 or 2 on the Drug and Alcohol scale) and 40 of those 50 progressed to 4 or above, the scales clearly define that this means those people are now recognising this as an issue and taking measures to reduce the harm caused by their addiction. Workers and managers have told us that this kind of information is invaluable in monitoring progress.

Finally, it is argued that the lack of specific guidance on how frequently the HOS should be used with service users makes it difficult to compare between services. The timeframe for second completion is not set by Triangle because the Star is used in a wide range of settings and so the implementation must reflect this. We do not encourage benchmarking between services or organisations unless allowance has been made for these kinds of differences.

Motivational Interviewing Is a Separate Technology to the HOS

A key aspect of the critique that Johnson and Pleace make of the Star is that it uses Motivational Interviewing (MI) as an approach to support change. They then go on to question the evidence for the effectiveness of MI and whether it should be applied in some of the contexts in which it is used. This conflates the Star with MI. Although the HOS can be used alongside MI, this is by no means essential and the Star can be used without employing MI techniques. A critique of MI is not a critique

of the HOS. Johnson and Pleace also question whether it is wise to focus on service user motivation in the way that the Star does. However, as they themselves acknowledge, motivation is an important part of the recipe of change. The Star does not imply that it is the only ingredient, but gives it a high prominence because it is an ingredient that the service user has access to.

The Fact that HOS Has Not Turned Back the Tides of Austerity Does Not Mean it Has Failed

Johnson and Pleace point to the fact that the existence of the HOS has not "prevented deep cuts to homelessness services". It is true that politicians like simple 'hard' facts. They want to know that homelessness has been reduced by x% and that £y has been saved in the process. However, in this new field of outcome measurement, we are learning that it is difficult to deliver this kind of information. This is partly because gathering this kind of data is a difficult task and one that most service providers do not have the organisational processes and software to perform. It is partly because these kinds of outcomes are often achieved over timescales that are longer than the politician's attention span or time in power. It is partly because change, as Johnson and Pleace argue, is dependent on wider societal factors that take decades to transform and that service providers have limited power to implement. However, the fact that the HOS engages with these complex realities is an asset not a weakness. It may mean that it does not deliver the silver bullet that everyone wants, but that may be an unrealistic expectation.

As Johnson and Pleace themselves acknowledge, outcome measurement both offers the possibility of benefits to service users, workers, managers and commissioners and is a difficult and complex task. The Outcomes Star aims to steer a course between the extremes of, on the one hand, treating each individual on their own terms and offering no map, structure or means of aggregating, and on the other, simplifying matters so much that the map and measurement bear no relation to the real world. The level of uptake of the Star, the substantial anecdotal evidence and growing body of independent research indicate that whilst it is far from perfect, it is striking that balance reasonably well and quite a lot better than the alternatives. We do not claim, as Johnson and Pleace state (p.37) that the tools are an "unqualified success" but our aim is to continue to improve them and to create new tools and approaches that enable key-work and outcome measurement to be more and more effective. We very much welcome informed, constructive critiques that support this process.

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The Homelessness Outcomes Star: A Brief Response to Criticism of Our Paper

Guy Johnson and Nicholas Pleace

Centre for Applied Social Research, RMIT University, Melbourne Australia
Centre for Housing Policy, The University of York

Last year we published a paper that examined the Homelessness Outcomes Star (HOS), one of several products developed and supported by Triangle. We have no commercial interest in the Homelessness Outcomes Star, or any other measurement tools.

This edition includes a response to our paper, written by Joy MacKeith, a Director from Triangle. In this short piece, we consider MacKeith's criticism of our paper and present some counter arguments to her criticisms of our work.

MacKeith begins by criticizing us for never having used the tool and for not conducting primary research with service users, managers and commissioners to evaluate the tool. We have not tested the HOS in the field, but then again, the aim of our paper, as we made clear, was to critically examine the ideological framework and the theoretical and methodological approaches that inform the HOS. We also need to be clear what our criticism of the HOS was. We can see some merit in the tool as a way for workers to track individual progress. However, the HOS cannot be employed as a rigorous means of social scientific analysis, if it really is being suggested that HOS can be used in that way. The flaws are simply too great. From our perspective 'testing' the HOS makes no sense.

In defending the HOS MacKeith makes seven specific claims. We can respond briefly to each.

Claim 1: The Star does not pre-determine service user goals. This is a fanciful claim. The HOS predetermines the areas for measurement, all of which are grounded in the idea of moving from 'weak' to 'strong'.

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Claim 2: The Star is not based on an individual pathology analysis. We think it is because the HOS makes no allowance for anything else. For instance, the HOS ignores the possibility that progress toward independent living may be constricted by poor access to affordable housing supply. Indeed someone can only 'fail' to be resettled into independent housing because of their own lack of progress. The whole logic of the HOS is that an individual is made 'housing ready' and that through behavioural modification, changing their (presumed) 'bad' habits and complying with treatment, lies the route to settled housing. The HOS ignores people's strengths and capacities, it is predicated on overcoming individual deficits that create barriers to exiting homelessness. MacKeith cites 'empirical research' that claims the HOS empowers individuals to 'define their own reality'. Scrutiny of that paper confirms that the claims are indeed made. However, they are not backed by any empirical evidence.

Claim 3: The Star is a holistic tool and the scales should not be used in isolation. This is, we think, a difficult criticism to sustain. What our paper does is criticise the logic of the HOS and highlight individual examples to illustrate a broader point. As we note at one point: "In every domain, the effects of structural, biographical and situational factors are ignored". Stepping back from the individual domains, consider the "journey of change" which underpins the HOS (Burns *et al*, 2013). The stages of this "journey of change" are described as "stuck", "accepting help", "believing", "learning" and "self-reliance" which we are now told by MacKeith, are not, in any sense, grounded in individual pathology.

Claim 4: The Star is not a self-completion tool. We agree. We do not say it is. We refer to self-report data, in the sense that workers fill it in and ask people how they're getting along. We make the point that self-report data suffers limitations. This is well established in the scholarly literature. We also investigated the claim made by Triangle Consulting that the HOS is tried and tested. We found no independent evidence that the HOS meets standard criteria of reliability and validity.

Claim 5: HOS data is meaningful for service users, worker and managers. It may be in relation to tracking individual progress, something we do note carefully. Our criticism is directed at the use of these data as any form of comparable metric or outcome measure.

Claim 6: Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a separate technology to the HOS. We raised the issue that the logic of MI is central to the way the HOS is operationalized. Indeed, as MacKeith's response acknowledges the HOS gives MI a 'high prominence'. We presented evidence that questions the effectiveness of MI, something that services should be aware of, irrespective of whether they use the HOS.

Claim 7: The fact that HOS has not turned back the tides of austerity does not mean it has failed. Fair enough, but the motivation behind developing something like HOS was in part to give homelessness services a way to evidence their activities. One could not reasonably expect a system of outcome measurement to necessarily stop a right-wing administration from cutting homelessness service funding. However, our point here is that measurement and quantification are hallmarks of new managerialism. Some things are easy to measure; others are not. Services exist in a highly competitive environment, where there is constant pressure to demonstrate efficient and effective service delivery. New managerialism has opened opportunities for profit making organisations to exploit services by offering products that appear to satisfy the needs of new managerialism. However, commercial organisations have a vested interest in their products; they need to market and sell them. If public money is spent on commercial products – be it case management, assessment or outcome measurement tools – it is vital that they are credible products that can stand up to rigorous and independent scrutiny. We leave it to readers to decide if the HOS meets these requirements.

The Homelessness Outcomes Star: Response to Johnson and Pleace's Brief Response

Joy MacKeith

Triangle, Hove, UK

It is helpful that Johnson and Pleace recognize the value of the HOS as a way for workers to track individual progress. We also believe it is helpful for managers to have an overview of progress for all individuals across a service or group of services. This helps services retain a focus on the service user. The availability of collated information about individual progress is also useful in reporting on progress to external stakeholders. Without some way of summarizing what is changing for service users the conversations tend to revolve around costs and savings, leaving the most important aspect – the people the services exist to serve – completely out of the picture. Star data can provide a helpful counterbalance to this. We have never suggested that it was a tool for 'social scientific analysis' or that the data on its own provided a complete picture of service achievements.

Relating to the blaming of the individual for the difficulties they are experiencing, it is worth highlighting that the evidence quoted by Johnson and Pleace is based on independent primary research: Peterson, Ellis, Lorenz and Armbrecht (2014) report a highly structured interventional study involving 10 men who were receiving services at a men's alcohol/drug rehabilitation facility of a mission for homeless persons. Harris and Andrews (2013) report an action research study of the implementation of the Star commissioned by a service provider. These two independent studies and several others focusing on other versions of the Outcomes Star indicate that the impact of using the Star is the opposite. It helps service users and workers to identify goals and harness their strengths to make progress towards them despite the challenging environment that they face (Macdonald & Fugard, 2015; Maguire, Johnson, Vostanis, and Keats, 2010; York Consulting, 2013)

We agree with the point made in Johnson and Pleace's original article that "better outcomes measurement has the potential to benefit governments, commissioners, service providers and the people they serve". The purpose of the HOS and other Stars is to benefit these constituencies, particularly service users. Like all tools it

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has the potential to be used in unhelpful ways and to serve agendas not envisaged or supported by their developers. We put an enormous amount of time and attention on supporting organisations to use it well, for its intended purpose in service of the service user.

It is a shame is that Johnson and Pleace imply that Triangle is an opportunist commercial organisation whose primary goal is to make a profit and which will promote its product whether it is fit for purpose or not. Triangle is a social enterprise with a social mission. We develop and support the Outcomes Star suite of tools because we have a strong belief, rooted in experience, that the Star is helpful to many service users. The majority of any surplus is invested in supporting organisations to use the Stars effectively, carrying out research and new tool development. Most of the training for the HOS is delivered by Homeless Link, a charity and the membership body for voluntary sector homelessness organisations. The HOS itself is available free of charge, though other versions of the Star require a license and we strongly encourage HOS users to buy a license too. This enables us to provide the support with implementation which experience shows is very much needed in the high pressure environment that Johnson and Pleace describe.

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Book Reviews

Part C

Carole Zufferey (2017)

Homelessness and Social Work: An Intersectional Approach.

London; New York: Routledge, pp. 160, £95,00

Dr Carole Zufferey is Senior Lecturer at the University of South Australia since 2002. As a social worker she worked in different areas like child protection, aged care, disability, mental health and homelessness in Australia and the UK. According to her professional website (http://people.unisa.edu.au/carole.zufferey) homelessness is her most important research interest. In her book she wants to "construct a new intersectional approach for understanding social work and homelessness" (p.8). Besides the current state of research, she presents results of her own intersectional research in the last more than ten years.

Structure

The book is structured in seven chapters. Following her introduction, outlining her research question and theoretical framework, the second chapter is about homelessness and social work. There she pleads for a "multilayered conceptualisation of intersectionality" (p.14) as a frame for social work with homeless people. In the next chapter she focuses on social work research and homelessness, using literature of third parties and her own research. She states that research in social work tends to 'other' marginalized groups like homeless people and to homogenise their lived experiences. Afterwards social policy and homelessness are the centre of attention, arguing for an intersectional perspective that would improve policy approaches to homelessness. With the fifth chapter about social work practice and homelessness, amongst others, she aims to "reinforce the advocacy and social change mandate of the social work profession" (p.104). The lived experiences of homelessness are her focus in the sixth chapter. She promotes to identify and use the user's perspectives and narratives about home and homelessness which would be often different to the professionals' view. She ends with her conclusions (which are more a summary of the first six chapters of her book). At the end of every section a list of references is to be found.

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Appraisal

Carole Zufferey identifies homeless people as a marginalized target group of social work. She demonstrates that 'homelessness' is a construction that depends on the perspectives and presuppositions of the observer, whether it be a social worker, a policy maker or a homeless person themself. In this context she shows the unequal distribution of power and furthermore asks, "who defines who is oppressed and privileged?" (p.22). Her theoretical framework is described as critical/structural as well as post-structural (p.1). In her book she takes up and reinforces exciting aspects and questions and I support her pleading for an intersectional approach in the context of homelessness as a social worker and researcher as well. I also understand that her focus is a theoretical one. But I got a little restless when she repeats constantly phrases like "intersectional social work research can contribute to constructing more complex and dynamic understandings of social work responses to homelessness" (p.40) without moving to conclusions: HOW do I work using an intersectional approach? And what are the concrete effects for the service users? So I drooled over practical outcomes at least from the end of chapter four. She advocates for a self-reflecting approach of social workers about their own privileges and reminds of the profession's political mandate which should be state of the art in all social work areas. But the title "*Homelessness and Social Work*" promises more than to convince the readers of a critical thinking about individualising and categorising homelessness, using an intersectional approach.

I also had a lot of difficulties to follow constantly the author's way of arguing. An example: She criticises some of the current definitions of 'homelessness' which focus on places of habitation like living in the streets, temporary housing etc. because this would include to define homelessness as a problem and housing as the only solution. Her proofs are references to other authors arguing the same way, but no (for me) comprehensible explanation is given: Where is the connection? Someone living in the streets can be defined as 'homeless' due to his housing situation without presuming a problem at the same time. In a similar way she criticises the definition of individual risk factors of homelessness. Although she refers to literature debating individual as well as structural causes for homelessness some lines before, she connects this discussion to the individual sickness paradigm that she understandably refuses (p.48).

In the same way she determines 'Housing First' concepts as "'one size fits all' approaches" (p.84) without citing research or statements where 'Housing First' is promoted as the only way to react on homelessness. But "Housing First is not designed to act as a solution to all forms of homelessness", as we can read for example in the Housing First Guide Europe (Pleace, 2016, p.75). She assumes also that 'Housing First' is a reaction to media representation of homelessness and the

costs for chronically homeless persons (p.77) and is to be seen as a neoliberal concept. At the end of the book she even goes one step further by claiming that, specifically with regard to 'Housing First', "legislation and policies have partly transformed social work thinking about homelessness" (p.150) – and not the other way around as I have perceived over the years.

So, although a lot of her statements are interesting and – for me – convincing, her attempt to persuading through good argumentation is not constantly successful. She also doesn't set good examples when she pleads to deconstruct the categories of client's identities and on the other hand talks e. g. about "different population groups" (p.52). Furthermore she claims to have checked the relevant literature in the US, UK, Europe and Australia. Reading the book one finds out (what is easy to understand), that she only checked literature in English. As a lot of European social workers and researchers only publish their ideas and findings in her native language (e. g. Germans and East Europeans) she can't claim to have a global overview about the current state of research. For example, the discriminations of homeless women are examined in Germany often using an intersectional approach in the last years (e. g. Schwarz, 2014; Reher, 2016). Sometimes she jumps from topic to topic, which is hard to follow. Furthermore, some parts of the book handle with her own research, but not with homelessness (e. g. "ageing and sexuality", p.132.). Also her reflections and research results about "mental homelessness" (p.137) are interesting, but what does that mean for homelessness care?

Conclusion

There are a lot of theoretical and methodological ways to look on homelessness like systemic or holistic approaches. The intersectional approach is one and for certain it is a very interesting and important one. But reading Carole Zufferey's book, I had the feeling that she tries to convince me by devaluating all other approaches and frameworks. As she states at the end of the book: "I argued that the complexities of this book distinguish it from other work in the field of social work and homelessness" (p.147). Nevertheless the book can be read as an interesting statement about an intersectional approach in social work and social policy using the example of homelessness.

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Susanne Gerull
Alice Salomon Hochschule, Berlin, Germany

Thomas J. Main (2016)

Homelessness in New York City: Policymaking from Koch to de Blasio

New York: NYU Press, pp.288, $50.00

As the largest city in the United States, New York City has an outsize impact on many aspects of American life ranging from the economy to popular culture. Such is also the case with respect to the problem of homelessness. Indeed, the most recent estimates from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development indicate that 1 out of every 8 persons experiencing homelessness on a given night in the United States does so in one of the five boroughs of New York City, despite the fact that New Yorkers account for only about 1 in every 50 Americans. In short, while homelessness is a problem that exists throughout the United States, it is uniquely acute in New York City.

It is therefore fitting that Thomas J. Main has dedicated an entire book to examining homelessness in New York City. Or more accurately, he has dedicated an entire book to examining the policy response to homelessness in New York City. As he makes clear in the introductory chapter, Main's book intentionally sidesteps grappling with why people become homeless and what types of assistance are most effective in helping them exit homelessness, two questions that have long been at the heart of empirical research on the problem. Instead, the focus here is on recounting the history of homeless policy in New York and examining what this history tells us about the policymaking process in a highly fragmented political system like New York City in which there is intense competition between branches of government, city agencies and individual policy actors. The conventional thinking on urban politics is that such a context tends towards stasis or (at best) incremental change, and Main occupies himself with investigating whether this is the case with homelessness policy in New York or whether it has followed an altogether different trajectory.

Main answers this question by unravelling the history of homelessness policy in New York in a series of chronological chapters that focus on successive mayoral administrations stretching from the late 1970s and the tenure of Ed Koch to the present day and Bill DeBlasio. Appropriately, this history starts with the landmark *Callahan v. Carey* lawsuit that ultimately led to the creation of a legally enforceable right to emergency shelter for single adults in New York City that took effect in 1981 (a subsequent and

separate lawsuit extended this right to families). If there is a defining feature of the policy response to homelessness in New York City, it is found in this legally enforceable right to shelter and the large, publicly funded shelter system that it has engendered. Indeed, much of the history of New York's response to homelessness (and thus much of the space in the pages Main dedicates to recounting this history) is comprised of the ongoing legal battles between advocates and the City about what precisely this right obligates the City to provide. Thus, we hear much in these chapters about daunting logistical challenges (What is an adequate number of showers per person? How can enough sheets be laundered and delivered to shelters?) with which city officials must contend in order to implement this right to shelter in practice. In sum, Main does a solid job in explaining how the right to shelter has played a central role in defining the parameters of homelessness policy in New York City, but one wishes he had done a bit more to highlight how anomalous this right to shelter is and what it might mean that few other jurisdictions have followed suit in adopting the same approach.

The above noted critique notwithstanding, Main's account of key developments in homelessness policy in New York City is meticulously researched, highly detailed, and worthy of praise. The book makes extensive and effective use of interviews that the author conducted with a wide range of policy actors past and present. The excerpts from these interviews make for the most interesting reading in the book as they provide insight into what these individuals were thinking (and often what pressures they were facing) as they sought to influence or implement New York's response to homelessness. These interviews are also strikingly candid. For example, one city official who had been in charge of New York's infamous intake center for families entering shelter is blunt in her assessment of it, saying "It was just a really kind of dreary, terrible place" (p 152).

These first-person accounts and Main's detailed history are almost enough to make the book worth reading in their own right, but Main capably ties them together in service of a coherent answer to the central question of his book. Specifically, he argues that homelessness policy in NYC has proceeded through a series of "quantum jumps" that resulted in rapid, and significant changes in direction rather than in a slow, incremental fashion as prevailing theory on urban politics would suggest. Main associates these incremental jumps with three distinct phases of homelessness policy in New York City. In the first phase, which he labels as the "entitlement phase," the focus was on creating a right to shelter and implementing it in practice. This was followed first by the "paternalistic phase," in which, echoing contemporaneous conversations at the national level about welfare reform, access to shelter was made contingent on clients working or seeking treatment; and then the "post-paternalistic phase" in which the emphasis moved beyond simply providing shelter to trying to solve homelessness through Housing First and other approaches focused on permanent housing.

Fans of John Kingdon's streams model of the policy process will find much to like in Main's analysis. In particular, Main describes how the development of homelessness policy in New York City owes much to policy entrepreneurs ranging from the attorney Robert Hayes who was the driving force behind the *Callahan v Carey* lawsuit, to former Mayor Rudy Giuliani who is largely credited with ushering in the paternalistic era, to Sam Tsemberis, the architect of the Housing First model who is seen as a central figure in shifting the emphasis towards providing housing instead of shelter and treatment. Academic researchers are also seen as highly influential, particularly in later stages when their research helped build consensus that solving homelessness was a feasible policy objective. This is an interesting story in its own right, and Main has enough grist here for an entirely separate book about the role of research in the policymaking process.

What then, has ultimately been wrought by the non-incremental trajectory of homelessness policy in New York City? Main contends with this question in the concluding chapter where he suggests that the amount of resources (more than $1 billion per year) that New York City dedicates towards a group with little political power who are (at best) marginal actors in the policy process represents a victory of sorts. However, this victory is not complete because, as Main points out, these funds have largely been dedicated towards creating a sprawling shelter system of variable quality and not towards the permanent housing that those experiencing homelessness really want.

It is in the decision to not continue this thread and offer thoughts on what should be done moving forward that my biggest critique with Main's book lies. Perhaps this critique is unfair as Main is explicit from the outset that he does not intend to offer any policy prescriptions and—to his credit—he remains true to his word. Nonetheless, I did find myself wondering what someone who has been a longtime observer of and occasional participant (a role about which he is admirably transparent) in the process of developing policy responses to homelessness in New York City thinks the next chapter of this story should look like. Surely someone in Main's position has some ideas about what could be done better and how it might be achieved? And surely those ideas would be of interest in the context of shelter counts in New York City that are at all-time highs and a mayor who has recently set a decidedly modest goal of reducing these counts? But that is arguably a topic that deserves its own book and even without prescriptions about what should be in the future, Main's work stands strongly on its own as a compelling history of what has been done to date and how we got where we are.

Thomas Byrne
Boston University, USA

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European Observatory on Homelessness

European Journal of Homelessness

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European Federation of National Associations Working with the Homeless AISBL
Fédération Européenne d'Associations Nationales Travaillant avec les Sans-Abri AISBL

194, Chaussée de Louvain ■ 1210 Brussels ■ Belgium
Tel.: + 32 2 538 66 69 ■ Fax: + 32 2 539 41 74
research@feantsa.org ■ www.feantsaresearch.org

FEANTSA