

February 3 Annual Survey

1999-2018

HUNGARY

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„February 3 Group”

Between 1945 and 1990 being homeless was a crime in Hungary. People who did not have a job and had no residence could be punished by the police.

Note:

This situation can return after October 15, 2018.

1990 – after the regime change Hungarian citizens tended to believe the new leaders - who were highly educated metropolitans living in Budapest - that homelessness was a situation where people needed help instead of being punished.

We as providers started to help homeless people **without any tradition of helping the poor.**

We started to expand our knowledge with guessing and fantasy. When we met each other and talked about what we had to do, we felt as we were acting in one of the episodes of our endless fantasy series.

All providers had their own perspectives and **nothing was consensual.**

We were unable to decide what to do because we all had different thoughts about **what was going on.**

In this moment in 1999 we started to look for some consensual solutions, and decided to start the data collection **February 3.**

So we decided to make a very simple data collection in 1999 to figure out:

A. Who are the homeless people?

B. Why are they in this situation (what has happened)?

C. What is missing for them to be able to solve their problems?

Note: We decided to ask all the homeless people who were in contact with any social worker that day.

1. We wanted to know the number of the homeless people who were actually reachable by the providers, so we asked the shelter users, and everyone who were sleeping rough.
2. To avoid the duplication we decided to make the survey in a given night, when the most homeless were in contact with the providers. February 3 happened to be the coldest night statistically during the whole year.

3. We created a personal identification code for everyone using their date of births and initials.
4. We wanted to know who were our clients, who needed to use the services.
5. We also wanted to see how the demographic and social status were changing over the years.

First year questionnaire

Questionnaire February 3, 1999

number:

(1)

Name and type of the service: <input type="text"/> (3) 1 Foundation 2 public instution 3 government 4 other		Recording place: <input type="text"/> 1 public places 2 night shelter 3 transitory home 4 day centre 5 office 6 soup kichen	
Interviewer's name:(5): <input type="text"/>		Recording date: 1999 - 02 - <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> (6)	
Gender: <input type="text"/> (7) 1 male 2 female 3 child		Initials of the name: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> (8), <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> (9)	
Birth place (10): <input type="text"/>		Date of birth: 19 <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> év (11) <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> hó (12) <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> nap (13)	
last address: <input type="text"/> (14)		Last residence: <input type="text"/>	
<p style="text-align: center;">0 no adress ,- 1 Budapest, - 2 other city,- 3 village, - 9 no answer</p>			

What is the reason for using a homeless institution?

- ① Due to family problems he had to leave home,
- ② could not pay the rent,
- ③ forcibly kicked out of his apartment,
- ④ after divorce the apartment remained with the former spouse,
- ⑤ evicted,
- ⑥ kicked out of a social institution,
- ⑦ released from jail,
- ⑧ his flat became uninhabitable
- ⑨ other..... (17)

How long have you been homeless?

(18) 19 (19) year, or (20) month, or c

Do you usually sleep in public places? (street, park, staircase, ruined building etc.)

- ① never ② rarely ③ often ④ always ⑤ no answer (2)

How often do you spend your nights in a homeless shelter?

- ① never ② rarely ③ often ④ always ⑤ no answer (2)

How much is your regular monthly income?

Where do you get money from regularly?

- nowhere salary pension, disabled benefit unemployment benefit financial aid
- family support healthcare, ill pension support regular benefit

(26) (27)
 main income income2

other sources of income:.....(29)

How much money do you spend per a day?

Maximum: , (30) Ft, Minimum: , (31) Ft

- no money no answer

Do you have any illness that has to be treated for a long time by doctors?

no yes no answer (32)

What is your illness treated by doctors now

Would you be able to work?

no yes, absolutely yes, partially no answer (34)

What is the reason for your incapacity?

Number of the homeless people:

People who did not answer our questions were not counted.

In 2005 and 2008 we ran a headcount with volunteers at the same time.

Profile of the homeless people at the beginning:

80% of the homeless people were male

average age: 44 years

most of them had a low income

(20% had less than 1.25 USD /day)

40% had some serious illness

What did we learn?

1. The person who used the shelters or are found by the outreach team rapidly changed.
2. Most of the homeless people are in continuous transition, they move back and forth between apartments and street, hostels.
3. Only every seventh homeless said that he or she had become homeless within a year.

4. The number of the homeless people living on the streets depends more on the activity of the outreach team, than on the living situation of the poor people.
5. We can conclude that the comparison of homeless and non-homeless people regarding the health status shows smaller differences than expected.
6. 40% of homeless people who are distrustful of homeless providers have reported that he or she felt more free after becoming (again) homeless.

By modelling the entries into and exits from homelessness (losing homes, leaving the homeless sector after several years), we see that

7. there is a buffer zone between the homeless people and the main society

where four, five times more people are staying compared to the number of the homeless people at a given time.

Most often, people from this zone will be homeless and return to this zone when their homelessness is resolved.

February 3, 2000 - 2018

Based on personal identifiers, we know who was present in our survey during the previous years. On this basis, we are able to put all the answers into a database.

We indentified 58,000 different homeless people in this period.

We want to build a model to figure out how people get into and out of homelessness.

We looked for the difference BETWEEN the people who stayed in the providing system, and the ones who left.

8. It seems, that EVERY HOMELESS PERSON HAS THE SAME CHANCE TO LEAVE THE PROVISION SYSTEM EVERY DAY.

But

9. unfortunately there is a group (7-10 % of the entire population) whose members are in each year among the interviewees and still do not fit in the dynamics outlined above. This group can not be treated by the model because their behaviour is markedly different from the majority. When calculating the main parameters of the model, they should always be taken out.

Thanks for your attention.

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