

Spaces of Social Integration for Homeless People in Italy, Spain, and Netherlands

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Research questions

- When we can *really* affirm that social and economic integration has been achieved by homeless people?
- Job, income and housing could be considered as *core ingredients* of social and economic integration.
- Are they enough?



Knowledge Background

- There is not unique definition of “social integration”
- Development of the concept of “social exclusion”
- Social exclusion as dynamic and multi factorial process (Atkinson and Davoudi 2000; Saraceno 2004)
- Social exclusion means *being shut out* to opportunities (job and income) and relationship (family, friends, community, society)



Hypothesis and Objectives of research

- Other *spaces* of integration “*interrelated*” to job, income and housing ambits could be achieved by the most vulnerable people
- Our aim is to identify *which individual, structural or social elements are functioning* for building *different spaces* of social and economic integration



Qualitative Methodology

In order to respond at research questions, we have used *Life History and Biographical Interview* method (Leisering, Leibfried, 1999) with the aim to hang on and to analyze:

- (*How*) Motivations and Agency (Individual capacities)
- (*What*) Opportunities and/or barriers (Institutional elements)
- (*Why*) Meaningful events and relevant relations changing life (helpful and adverse) (Social network)

Looking with a long perspective to *past, present and future*



Case studies

- 3 cities (Madrid, Rome, Amsterdam)
- 3 programmes for social, job and housing inclusion
- 30 people interviewed (homeless from more than 1 year)
- Setting of interviews: house, street, emergency accommodation, canteen, public space, day center, NGO's Employment Office

Team of researchers and investigators*
Duration of field research May-July 2018

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Case studies

- Madrid (Spain)
- RAIS Foundations's Employment Programme
- Missions: Labour intermediation, participation and matching with the companies
- 10 people interviewed involved in the labour market at the different levels



- Rome and Turin (Italy)
- NGO's Social Inclusion programmes and Assistance territorial system
- Mission: Social and economic integration
- 10 people interviewed living in the shelter, assisted by social security, employed (temporary jobs)



- Amsterdam (Netherlands)
- Discus Project - HVO Querido
- Mission: housing inclusion, psychological support and social rehabilitation
- 10 people interviewed housed



Madrid – Spain

- Spain: 33,000 homeless people (2014)
- Madrid: 1,905 homeless people (2014) (second city for number of homeless people after Barcelona)
- Current Homelessness system focuses on Emergency Approach
- Comprehensive National Strategy for Homeless Persons 2015-2020
- Any national budget allocated
- Regional and Local Authorities are responsible for care system
- Local Experiences of Housing First
 - RAIS Foundations' Employment Program (NGO)
- Goal → social and labor inclusion of homeless people through the improvement of their employability and the work with the business network



Rome (and Turin)- Italy

- Italy: 50,724 homeless people (2014)
 - Rome: 7,709 and Turin (1,729) homeless people (2014) (second and fifth city for number of homeless people)
 - National Guideline for Tackling Homelessness was approved in 2015 and funding (50+20 million) were allocated by Ministry of Social Policy (2016-2020)
 - Multilevel Governance
 - Policies and services focuses still on Assistance solutions for basic needs and Temporary Accommodations
 - Recent development of Housing First Approach
 - Bottom up social innovative solutions and strong role played by third sector
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- “NGO’s* Socio-economic Inclusion Programs” based on basic assistance needs, job orientation and/or social security assistance (included Minimum Income Scheme – REI) and housing solutions
 - *Center “Madre Teresa di Calcutta”*
 - *Municipality of Turin*



Amsterdam - Netherlands

- More than 60,000 homeless people in Netherlands (2016)
- Municipalities are responsible for supporting self-reliance and social problems
- Serious housing problem (shortage of 10,000 houses)
- Housing First has become the main focus policy in Amsterdam since 2018

- DISCUS Project – HVO Querido (Housing First)

Based on good collaboration between the different parties involved (Municipalities, social housing corporations, care institutions)

→ People receive house (pay the rent, accept social support, no nuisance)

→ Goals are (re)integrate people in Amsterdam society



Socio-anagraphic information

	Spain	Italy	Netherlands
Gender	9 men 1 woman	7 men 3 women	9 men 1 woman
Average age	51	53	50
Citizenship	7 natives 3 foreigners	9 natives 1 foreigner	6 natives 4 foreigners
Marital status	4 sigle 5 separated 1 married <i>2 with sons</i>	6 single 4 separated <i>3 with sons</i>	7 single 1 married 1 cohabitant <i>4 with sons</i>
Education	6 low level 2 middle level 1 high level	9 low level 1 high level	5 low level 3 middle level 2 high level
Job position	8 employed 2 unemployed	5 employed 2 unemployed 2 unable to work 1 waiting for internship	2 employed 3 unemployed 3 unable to work 2 internship
Residence	10 formal address	5 formal address 5 virtual residence	10 formal address

Profiles

Some people were able to be included following *“the traditional way”* (job, income and housing)

→ *they are homeless by accident*

they have lost everything

they have not sufficient economic resources, secure employment and strong family support but they have not other factors of risk (mental disorder, addictions, drug abuse)

they are engaged in work activities

Some people were able to be included *“in a different way”*

→ *they are homeless with a long career of poverty and strong factor of risks*

they receive “light” job opportunities (traineeship or internship)

they receive public assistance (allowance, minimum income, social benefits)

they live into the emergency accommodation or are involved in HF projects

they visit daycare centers



Processes

- All people are involved in one kind of *lateral pathway toward “inclusion”*
 - *job inclusion → Madrid*
 - *housing inclusion → Amsterdam*
 - *socio-economic inclusion → Rome (and Turin)*
- A strong interrelation between lost of job, housing costs, evictions e becoming homeless (IT-NE)
- People *coming in and coming out* of the condition of *extreme poverty* (SP)
- Material and relational deprivation could be temporary (accidental events) or so far (long career of poverty linked to family) (IT-SP-NE)



Leavers vs. Barriers

INDIVIDUAL

Strong motivations
Agency and individual choice
Demonstration of personal attitudes, skills and wishes

STRUCTURAL

Access to independent house is as one of the life changing events
Functional meeting with social workers (feeling up)

SOCIAL

“Weak ties” with peers
Meeting with new “friends” on the street
Word of mouth
Internet connection
Facebook profiles

INDIVIDUAL

Passive adaptation
Emotional disturb
Lack of self determination
Health
Undocumented/unrecognized inabilities

STRUCTURAL

Standard and homogeneous solutions for everybody
“Long waiting list” for getting everythings
Complicated bureaucratic mechanisms

SOCIAL

Lacking of family support
Problematic relation with partner or sons
Difficult to build new relations



Knowledge forefront

Job (*whether it is temporary*), housing (*whether it is not affordable*), and income (*whether it is low income*), are not enough to *guarantee* a process of socio-economic integration

These make possible to maintain people *alive*, to maintain connections with the society and to avoid completely isolation

People solve basic needs, and then they look for “social integration”

People interviewed have done certainly “giant steps” thanks to the programmes

They try to build “own” different spaces of integration

(Anyway) people still live “into the homelessness world”



Voice of people

Core ingredients for social inclusion are connected to positivity, hope and believe

I feel that I will be not homeless when I will be free to live with my economic resources

It is a new chance for a normal life

Social inclusion means to be independent of care system

Myself makes the difference. I never stop to believe in myself and, as consequences, also the others have believed in me

