

Péter Győri Dr. (C. Sc.) :

Turning into Nobody?

The Decades of Losing Ground

2018



Stages of the management of homelessness in Hungary

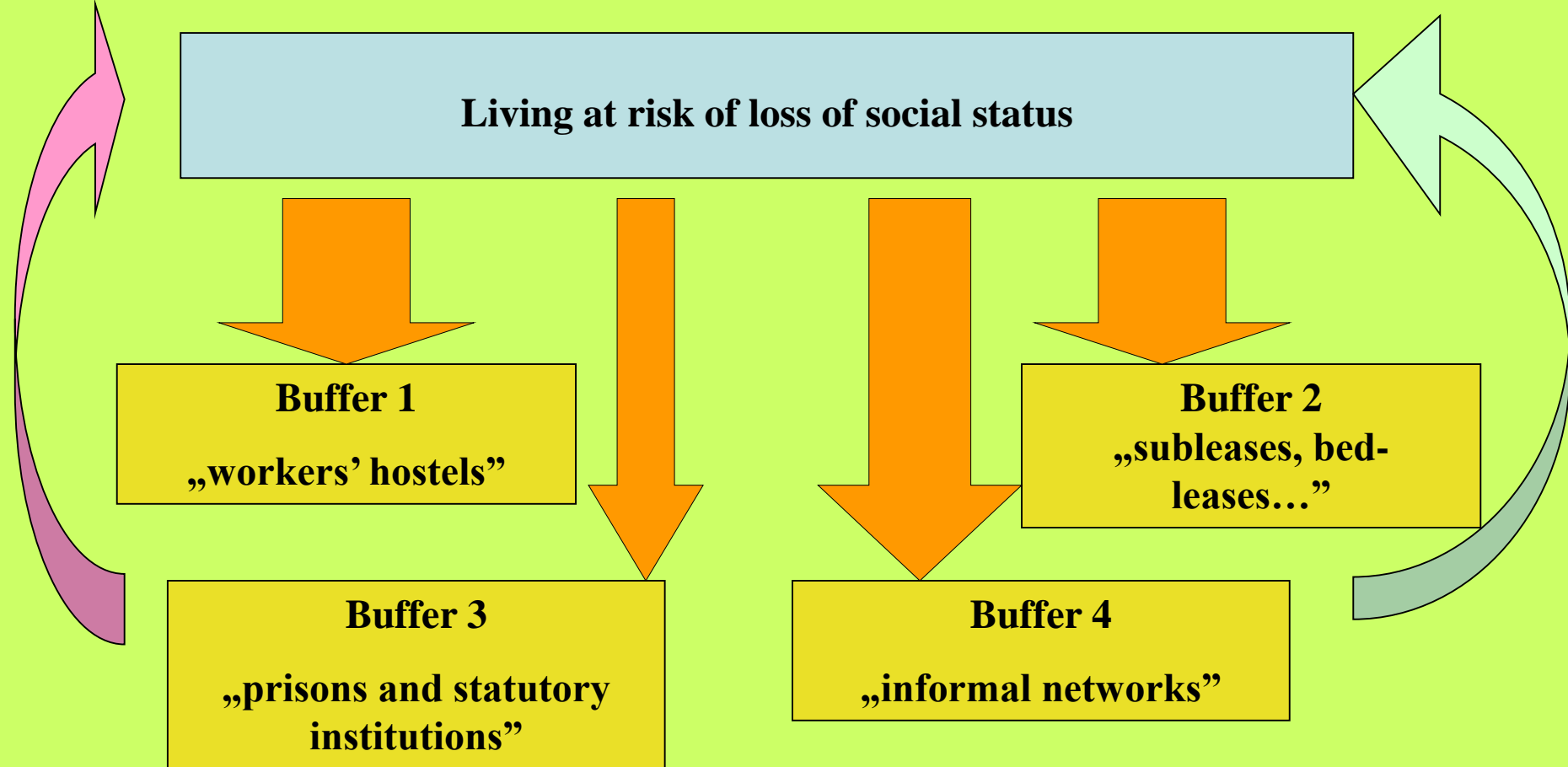
- I. Period of the state-party system before 1990
- II. Period of the democratic system after 1990
- III. Period of the authoritarian system since 2010

I. What kind of (housing) tools worked in the case of the loss of social status during the period of the state-party system before 1990?

(loss of social status : loss of family, loss of work, loss of housing)

- ❖ Informal assistance (friends, family, neighbors)
- ❖ Sublease, bed-lease
- ❖ Workers' hostel
- ❖ Repressive tools (vagrancy, closed institutions, forced alcohol therapy, prison)

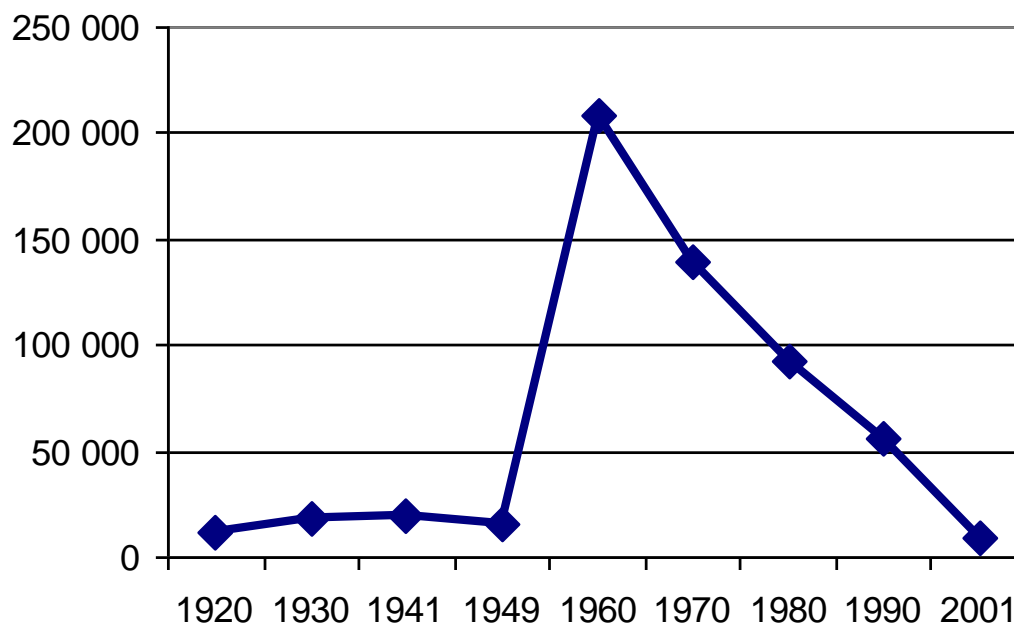
The „Model” of the period before 1990



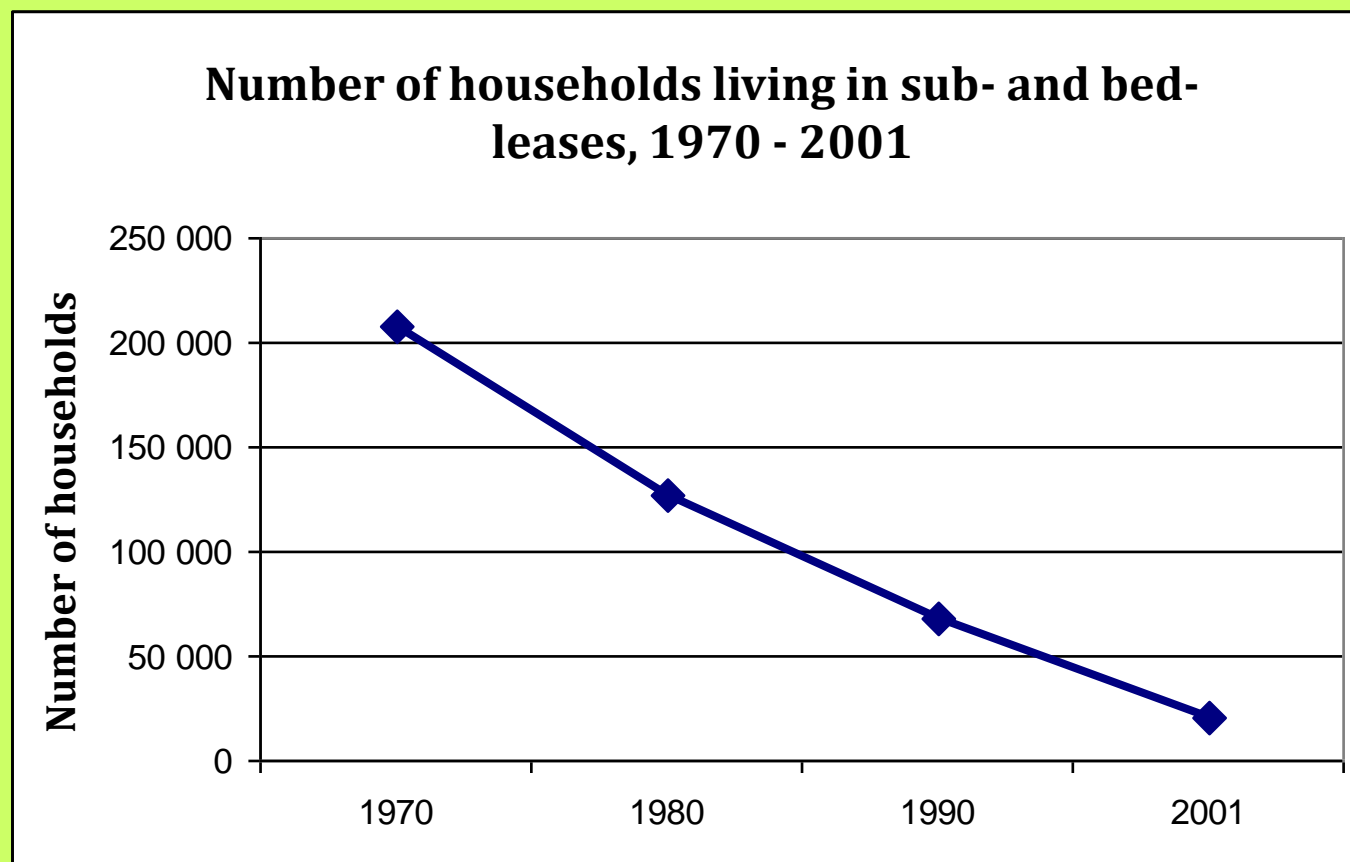
Avoiding the loss of social status - without support services

„Buffer1 ”: Workers’ hostels – the number of places decreases continuously, after 1990 they close down, and then are re-established after 2010.

**Number of people counted in workers’ hostels
and tied accommodation 1920-2001**

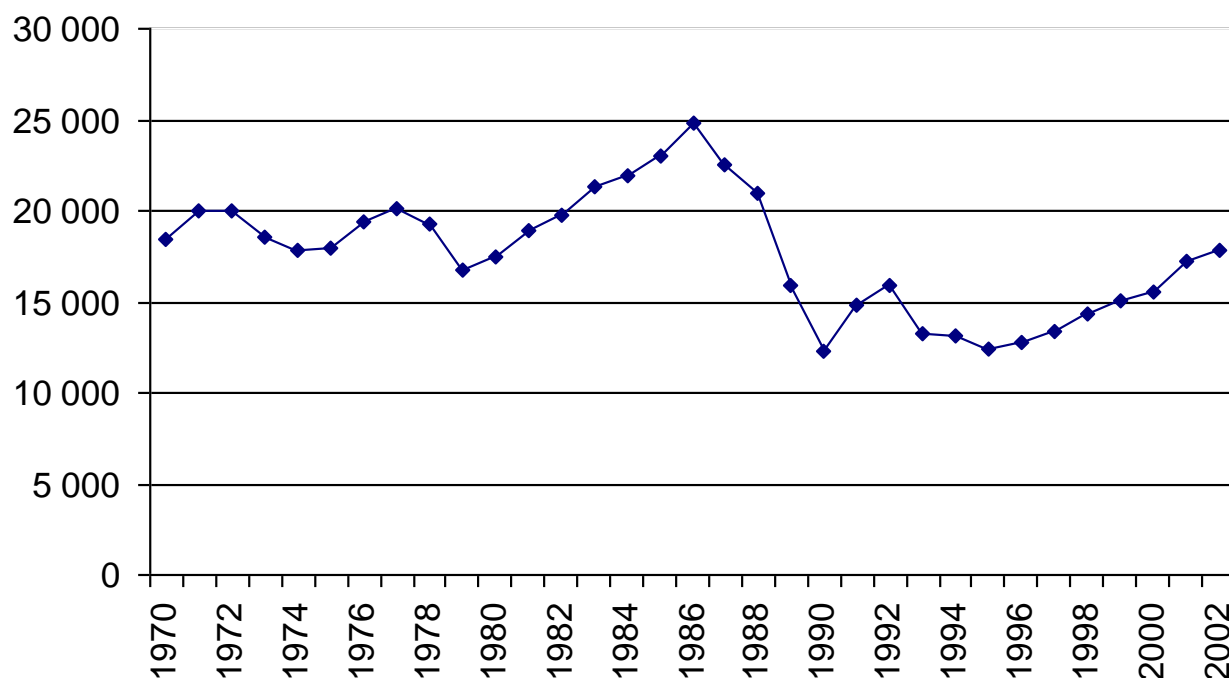


„Buffer 2”: The number of people living in **bed- and subleases** decreases steadily, and is then revived in illegal (quasi-market) form or in the form of sofa-surfing.



„Buffer 3”: The number of **detainees** peaked in the mid-1980s and then suddenly declined – since 1990 non-constitutional closures cease to exist

Number of people in detention since 1970



Penal Code of 1978

IV. Article on the Criminally unemployed

„Any person capable of working but who avoids employment, and who has been found or sentenced for **criminal unemployment** within two years **commits an offence, and can be sentenced for up to one year of imprisonment, work rehabilitation or a fine.**

As a side penalty, they can also be expelled.”

Penal Code of 1978.

**On blocking and
banning
vagabonds,
tramps, those
unwilling to find
work**

Number of detainees between 1970 and 2000

Year	pre-trial detention	convict ed	forced medical treatment	waiting for detention	other	sum
1970	3 234	14 019	349	772	na	18 374
1980	2 539	12 351	229	957	1 452	17 528
1990	3 246	8 897	146	30	na	12 319
2000	4 105	11 201	173	60	na	15 539

Source: Central Office of Penal Institutions

„Other” includes those under **strict custody**, **strict work rehabilitation** and **alcohol rehabilitation through employment**.

1985.

According to the state-party people with a **lifestyle** of avoiding work should be punished more severely and forced to work.

They feel that the appr. 10 000 vagrants and those intentionally unemployed, and about 12 000 registered alcoholics who only work casually pose a great problem in Budapest.

Meetings of the state party (Budapest) 1985.

*„A főváros életében komoly gondot okoz a **mintegy tizezer csavargó, munkakerülő és kb. tizenkétezer nyilvántartott alkoholista**. A társadalom periferiájára szorult személyek előbbi csoportját azok képezik, akikre a **munkakerülő, bűnöző életvitel, életmód** a jellemző. Ezek társadalmi veszélyessége a legnagyobb. A második csoportra az alkoholista életmód és a **létfenntartás érdekében végzett alkalmi munka** a jellemző. ...”*

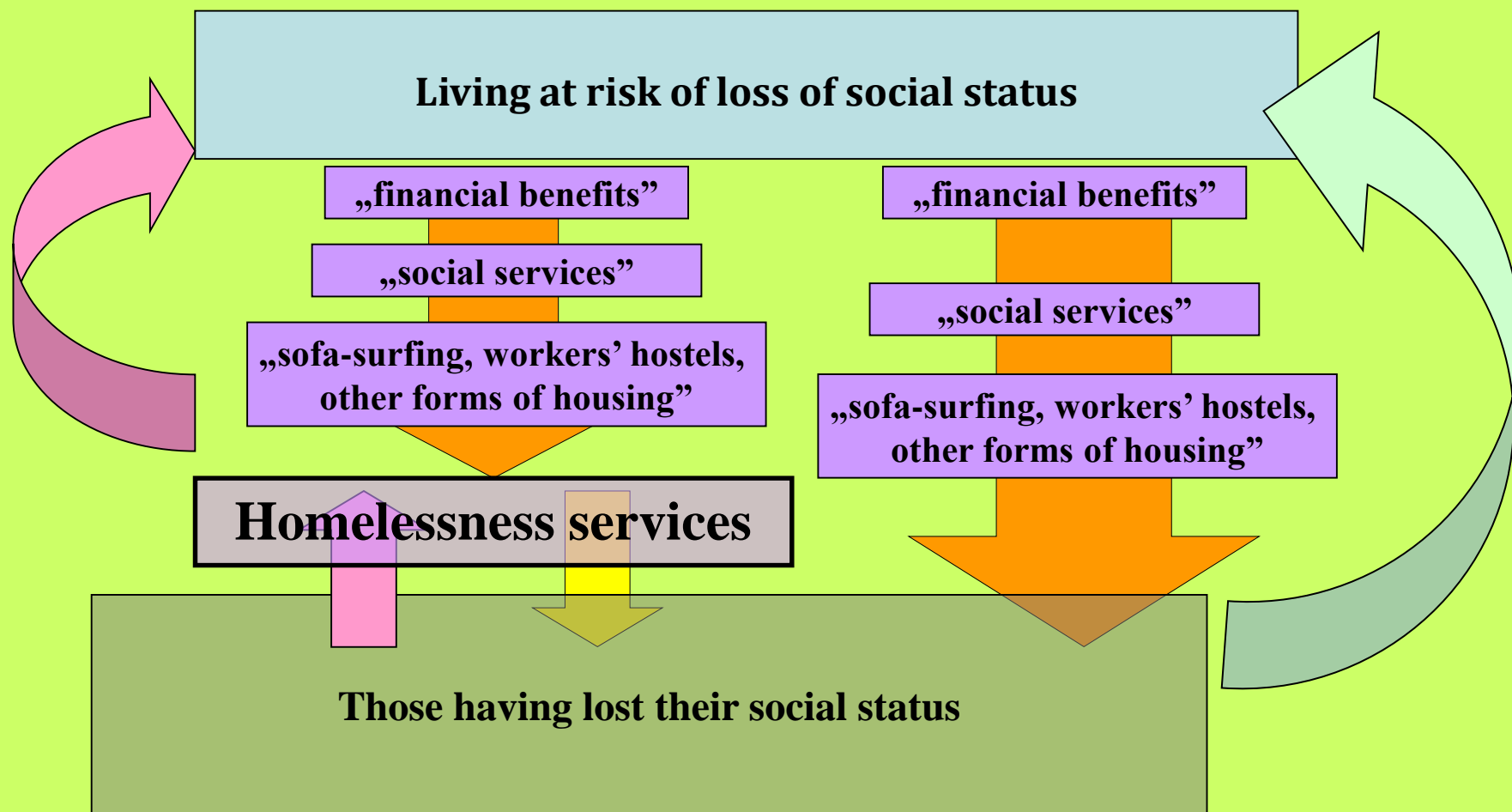
*„Az erőfeszítések ellenére a kívánt eredményt nem sikerült elérni. Ehhez a **közveszélyes munkakerülés szigorúbb szabályozása, a munkára kötelezés lehetősége lenne szükséges.**”*

II. What kind of tools worked in the case of the loss of social status during the period of the democratic system after 1990?

(**loss of social status:** loss of family, work and housing)

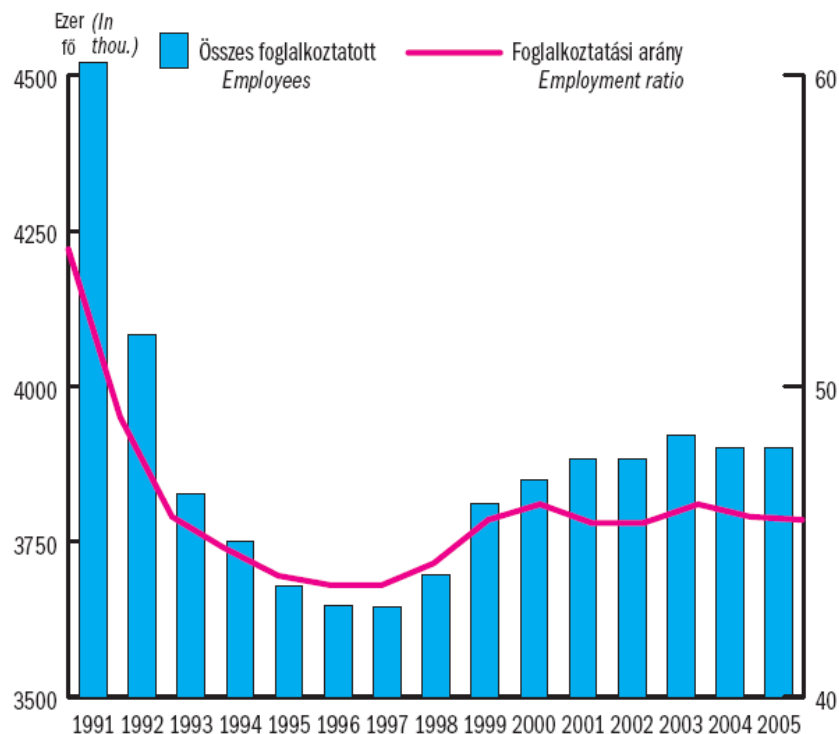
- ❖ Rule of Law: repressive measures (closed institutions, prisons for not having employment, etc) **have ceased** to exist
- ❖ Subleases, bed-leases – their role **diminished** temporarily
- ❖ Workers' hostels - their role **diminished** temporarily
- ❖ Informal support (from friends, family, neighbourhood), sofa-surfing – **became more and more important**
- ❖ Non-legal housing solutions (illegal substandard overcrowded hostels, illegal subleases) – **became widespread**
- ❖ Mainstream social support services – **homelessness services created**

„Model” of the period after 1990



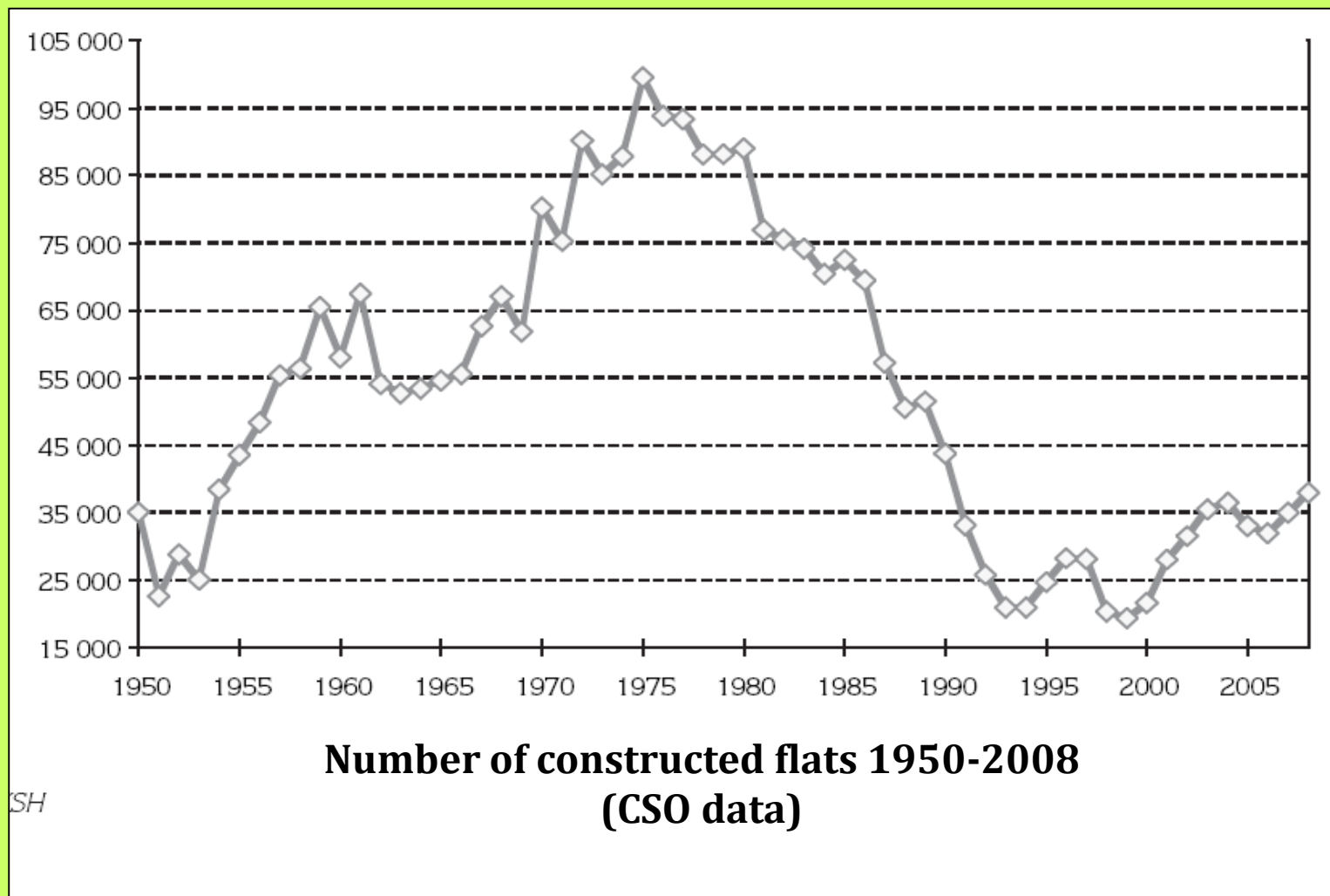
In the transition between the system of party-state before 1990 and the democratic system after 1990, **the loss of social status becomes a mass phenomenon.**

After the transition, the
number of people employed
decreased by almost 1 million.
(-20%)



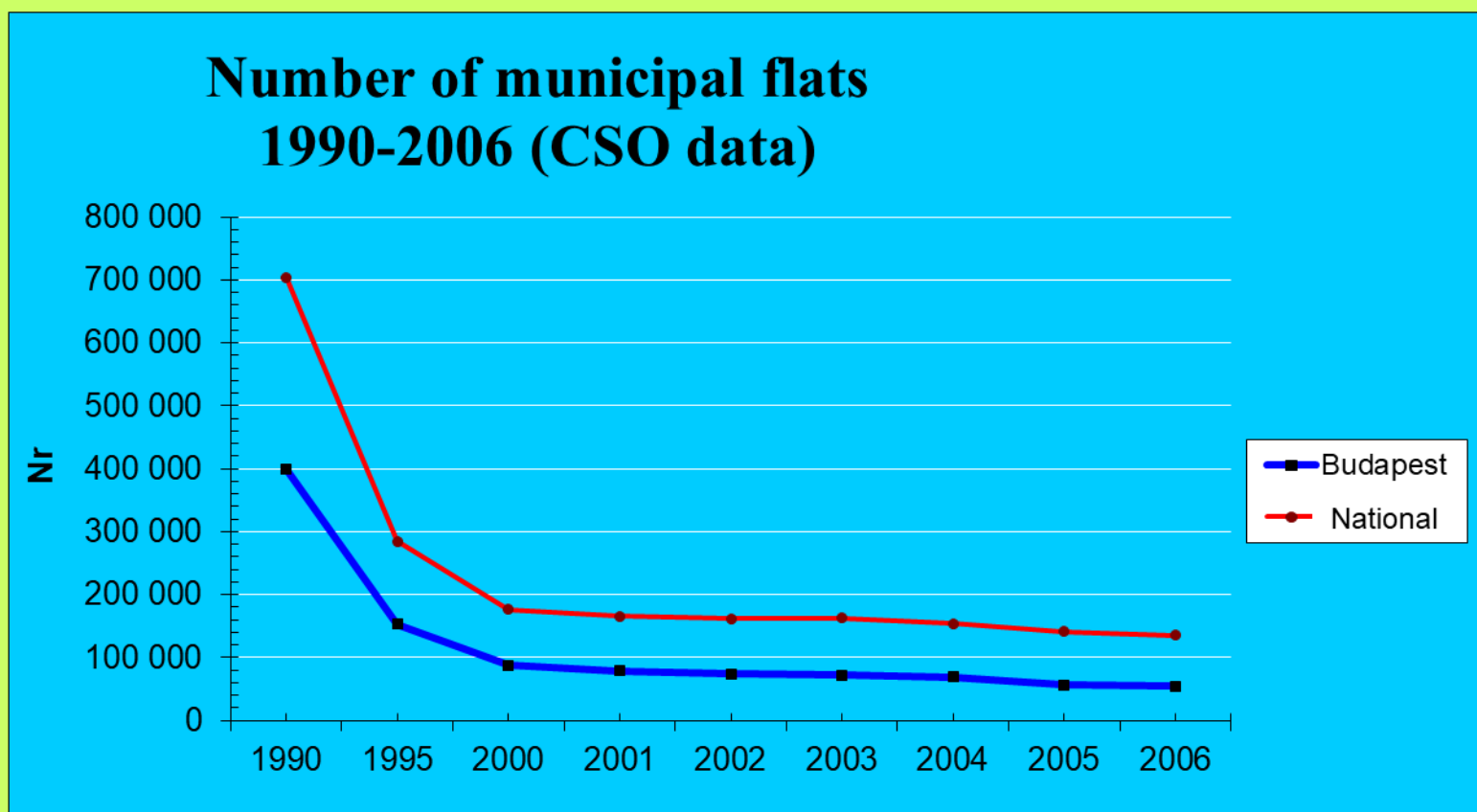
4.1. ábra: Összes foglalkoztatott (Employed)

Housing construction declined steadily from the middle of the 70s, and dropped to a low point in the 1990s.



Privatisation of housing:

After the system-change, 9/10 of the municipal rental housing was sold.



Homelessness services:

After 1990, for a few years, thousands of places were created to accommodate homeless people.



Paradigm shift 1.

- ✓ **In the period before 1990**, „old” **systems of buffers (storage)** – bed-leases, workers hostels, closed institutions - were maintained to „take care of” poverty and personal crises.
- ✓ **After 1990** these were closed down or their numbers decreased temporarily.
- ✓ **Following 1990** „new” **systems of buffers (storage) – the homelessness services - were created** to „take care of” poverty and personal crises to make up for the previous buffers that had been closed down or reduced (often in the same building).

Paradigm shift 2.

Handling the situation of rough sleepers, bums and unemployed people:

Social support *instead of* repressive measures

Social support = homelessness services

Handling the situation of people without a home, living in substandard housing
and those who cannot find housing without support:

Social support *instead of* housing policy

Social support = homelessness services

**No social housing policy tool is available for those who cannot pay
for housing without external support.**

Some of the main anti-social elements of housing policy:

- Rapid and forced privatisation of housing
- Renting out the remaining public (municipal) housing stock for those who are socially not vulnerable
- The under-regulation of the rights and obligations of tenants and landlords
- The abolition of regulations related to rent increase, termination of the contract, making eviction easier – a weakening of the rights of tenants
- No central rental support, the housing benefit introduced 15 years later was abolished after 10 years
- No working public bankruptcy scheme, those with collapsing mortgages in foreign currencies are being evicted in great numbers

III. What kind of tools exist in the case of the loss of social status in the authoritarian period since 2010?

(**loss of social status**: loss of family, work and housing)

- ❖ Repression of the Rule of Law: **revival of repressive measures** (offense, fine, prison)
- ❖ Informal support (friends, family, neighbourhood), sofa-surfing – **grows more important**
- ❖ Non-legal housing solutions (illegal substandard overcrowded hostels, illegal subleases) – **become widespread**
- ❖ Workers' hostels, subleases, bed-leases – **grow more important**
- ❖ Mainstream social support services – **homelessness services growing**

2010

Parliamentary and municipal elections

The period of breakdown of the democratic political system

Criminalization of homelessness

2011

Budapest Capital City Decree
„whoever uses public space for living purposes”
commits an offence.

2011

Referendum in District 8 of Budapest
Aim: Increase of anti-homeless sentiments
Only 13% of the voters participate.

2012

Modification of the Law on Petty Crime
Whoever uses public space in a way that is not meant to be normally used - lives
there and stores his/her belongings in a public space,
commits an offence.

2012

The Constitutional Court abolishes
those parts of the Law on Petty Crime
that criminalize rough sleeping.

2013

Modification of the Constitution

„In order to protect public order, public security, public health and cultural values, an Act or a local government decree may, with respect to a specific part of public space, provide that staying in designated parts of public space as a habitual dwelling shall be illegal.”

2013

Budapest City Decree

The Law on Petty Crime and several local decrees had contained the definition of areas where rough sleeping was forbidden. Local municipalities and the city of Budapest together ban rough sleeping in almost the whole city.

EUROPEAN RESEARCH CONFERENCE
Social and Economic Integration of Homeless People.

BUDAPEST, September 21st, 2018
Central European University

2014 then 2018

Parliamentary and municipal elections

The period of breakdown of the democratic political system continues

Criminalization of homelessness continues

May 2018

Modification of the Constitution

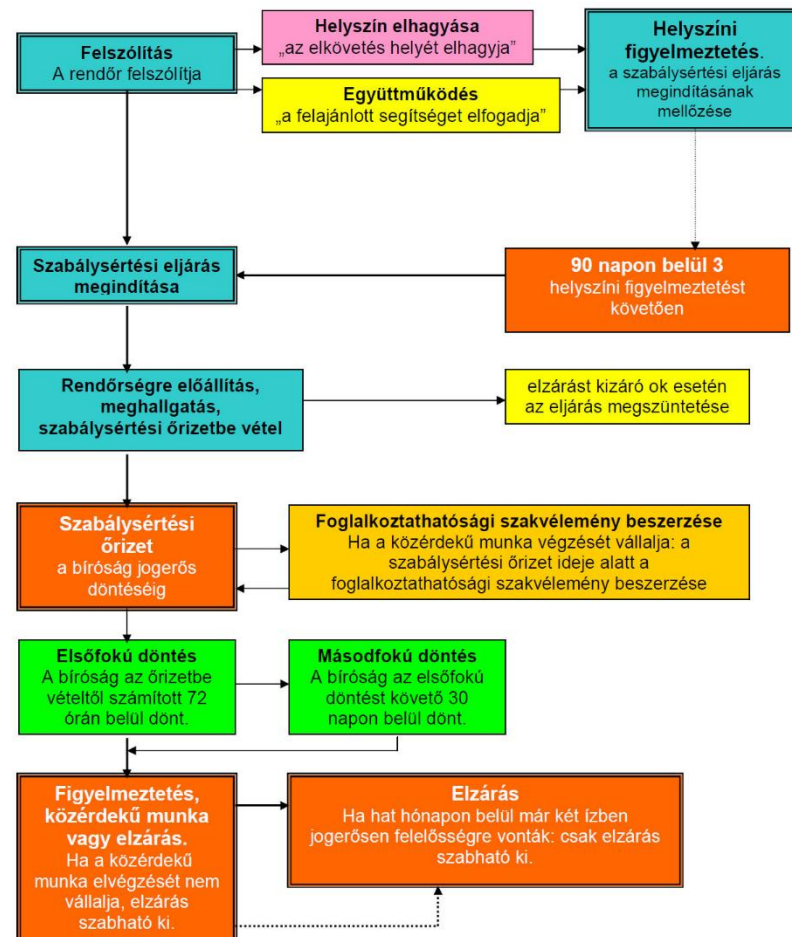
„It is forbidden to live in any public place”

2018

Modification of the Law on Petty Crime

A közterületi hajléktalanság kezelésének NER-modellje

Valaki „közterületen életvitelszerűen tartózkodik”



Schematic summary

I. Period of the state-party before 1990				
Rough sleepers, bums, unemployed	repressive measures			
people without a home, living in substandard housing and those who cannot find housing without support		housing policy measures		free market and informal mechanisms
II. Democratic period after 1990				
Rough sleepers, bums, unemployed	X	X	social support tools	
people without a home, living in substandard housing and those who cannot find housing without support		X	social support tools	free market and informal mechanisms
III. Authoritarian period since 2010				
Rough sleepers, bums, unemployed	repressive measures	X	social support tools	
people without a home, living in substandard housing and those who cannot find housing without support		X	social support tools	free market and informal mechanisms

In the meantime

How has the composition of homeless people changed?

Since February 3, 1999, there has been a survey among rough sleepers and people sleeping at homeless services.

Homeless services, their staff as well as homeless people participate on a voluntary basis.

With data from the first and last year of the past twenty years, as well as some data from the survey of 2018 we try to show how the composition of homeless people has changed during this long period.

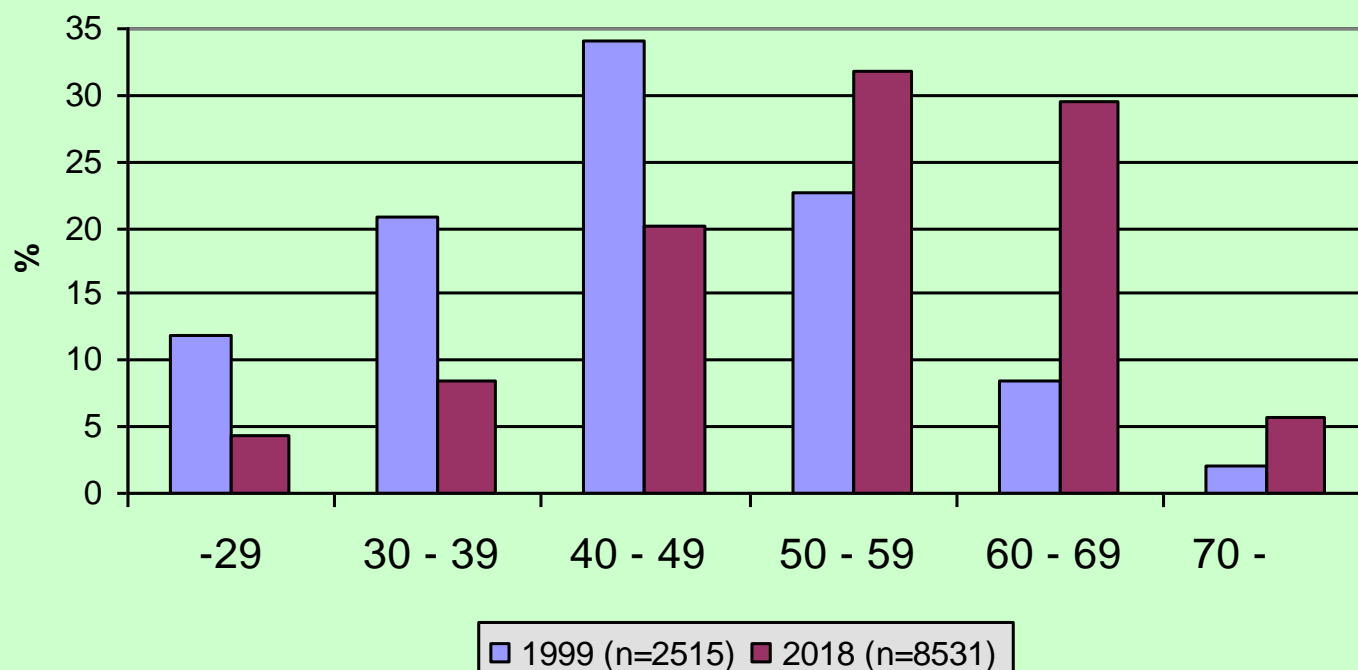
You can find more lengthy analyses and publications by the

February 3rd Working Group at:

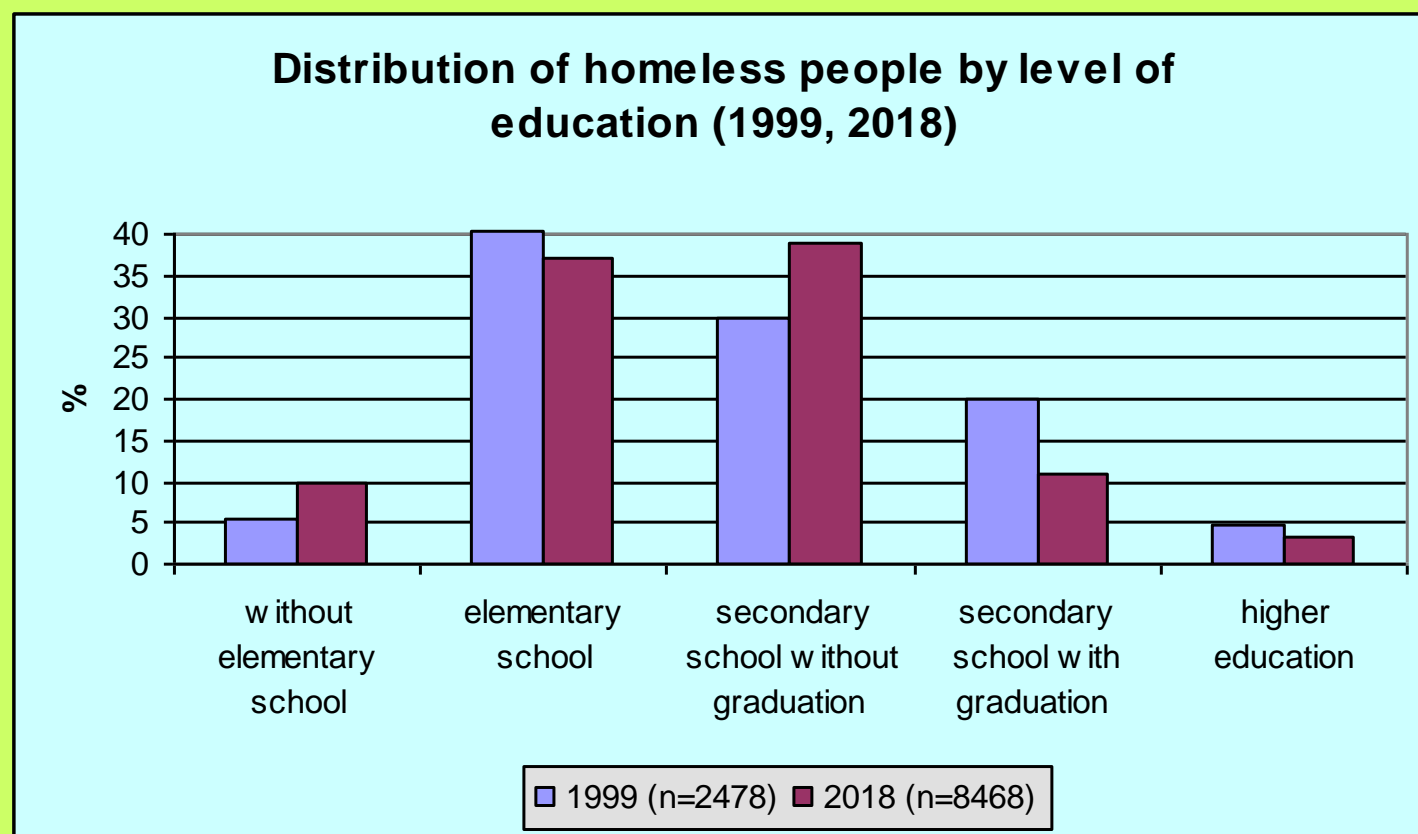
www.menhely.hu
www.gyoripeter.hu/

During the past twenty years, **the age structure** of the homeless population has changed fundamentally.

Distribution of homeless people by age (1999, 2018)

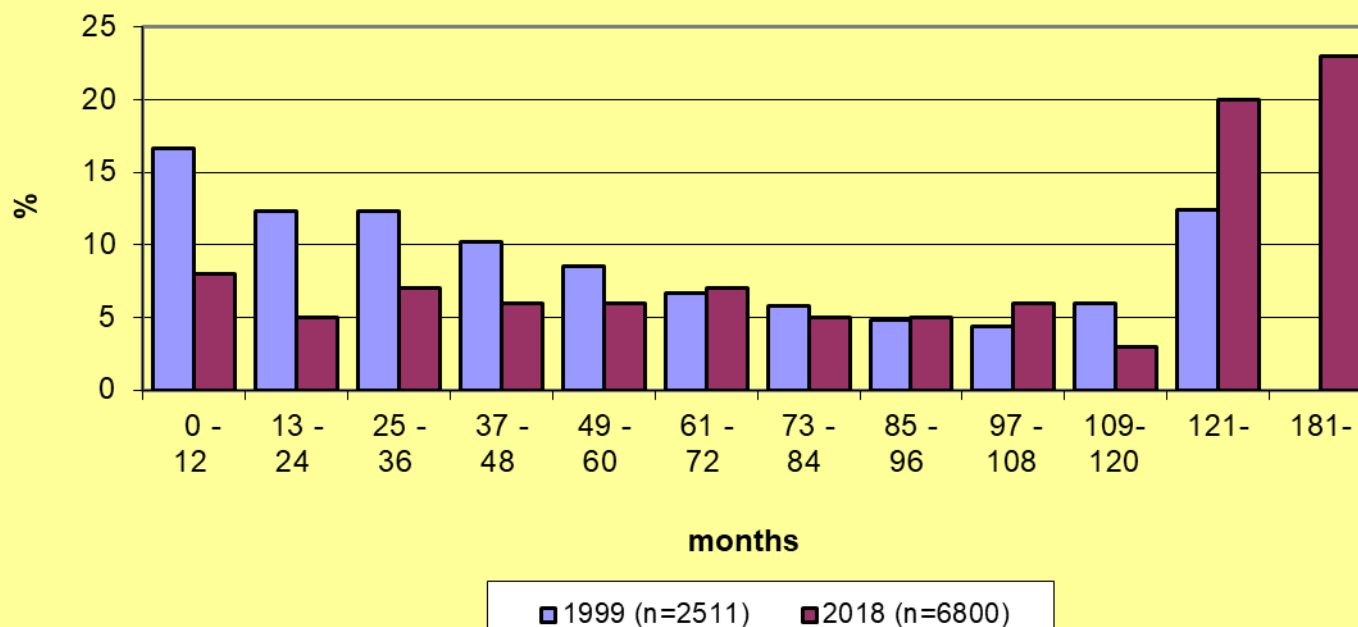


During the past twenty years, the highest **level of education** of the homeless population typically worsened.

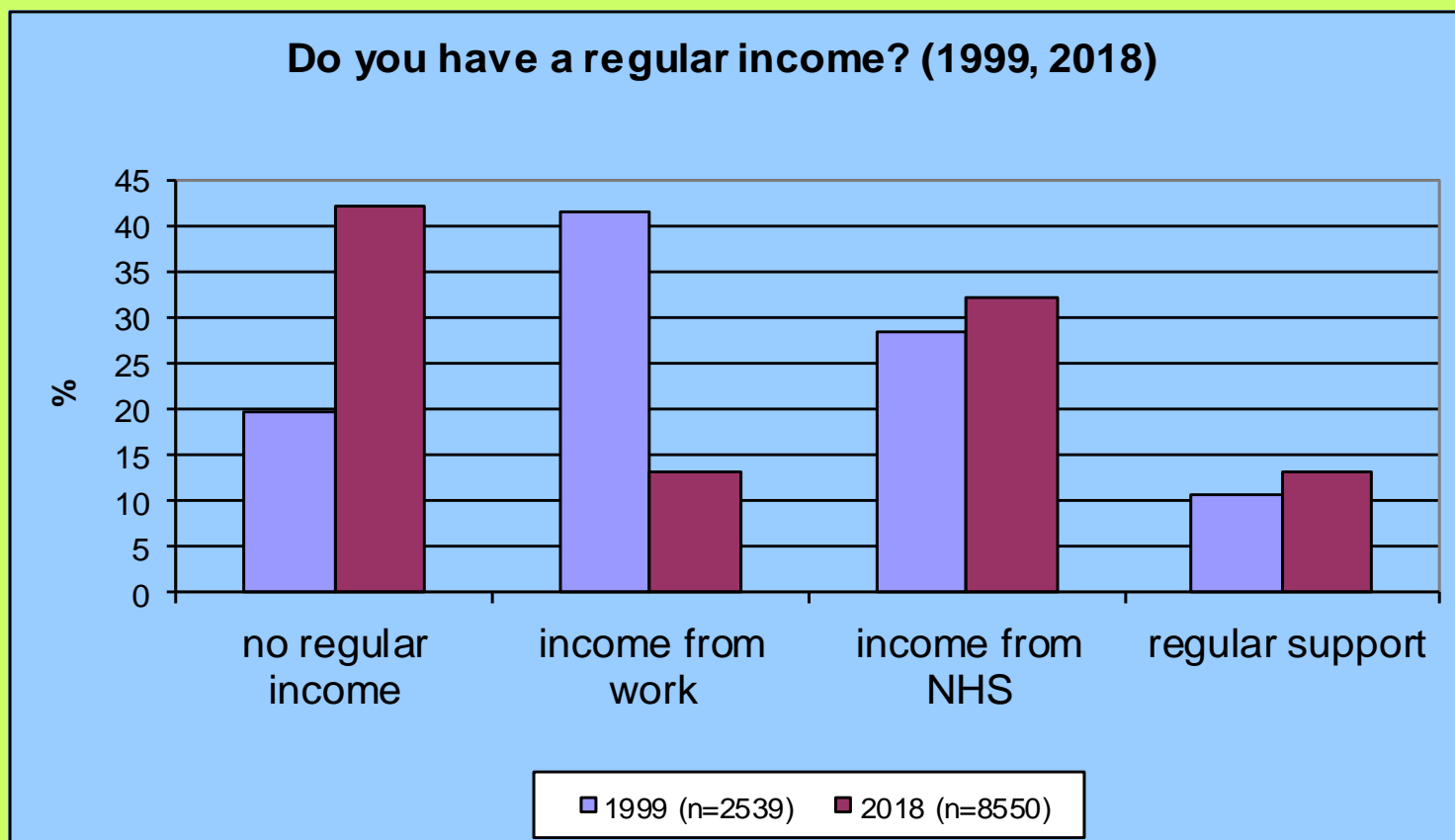


During the past twenty years, the proportion of **chronically long-term homeless** people has radically grown within the homeless population.

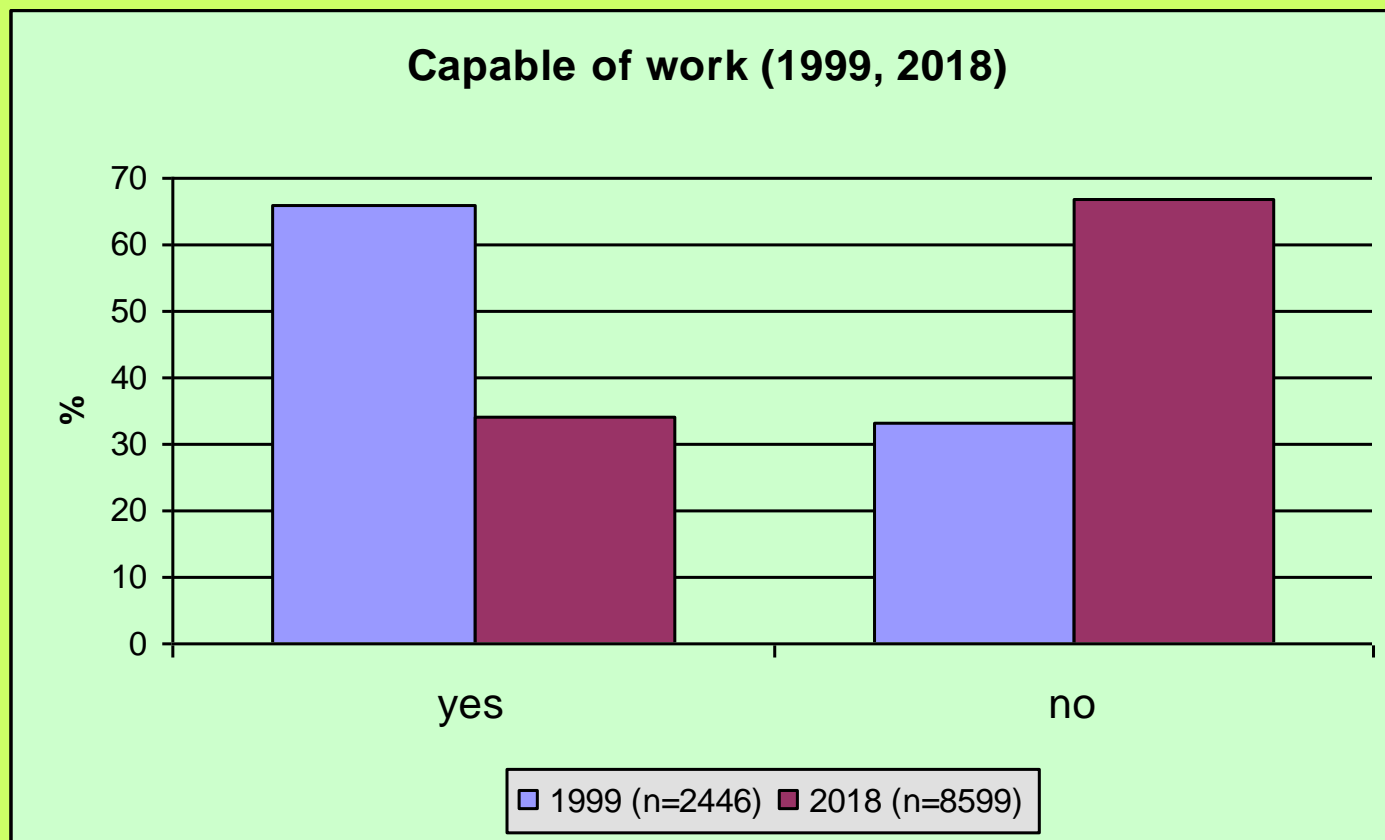
For how long have you been homeless?
(number of months) (1999, 2018)



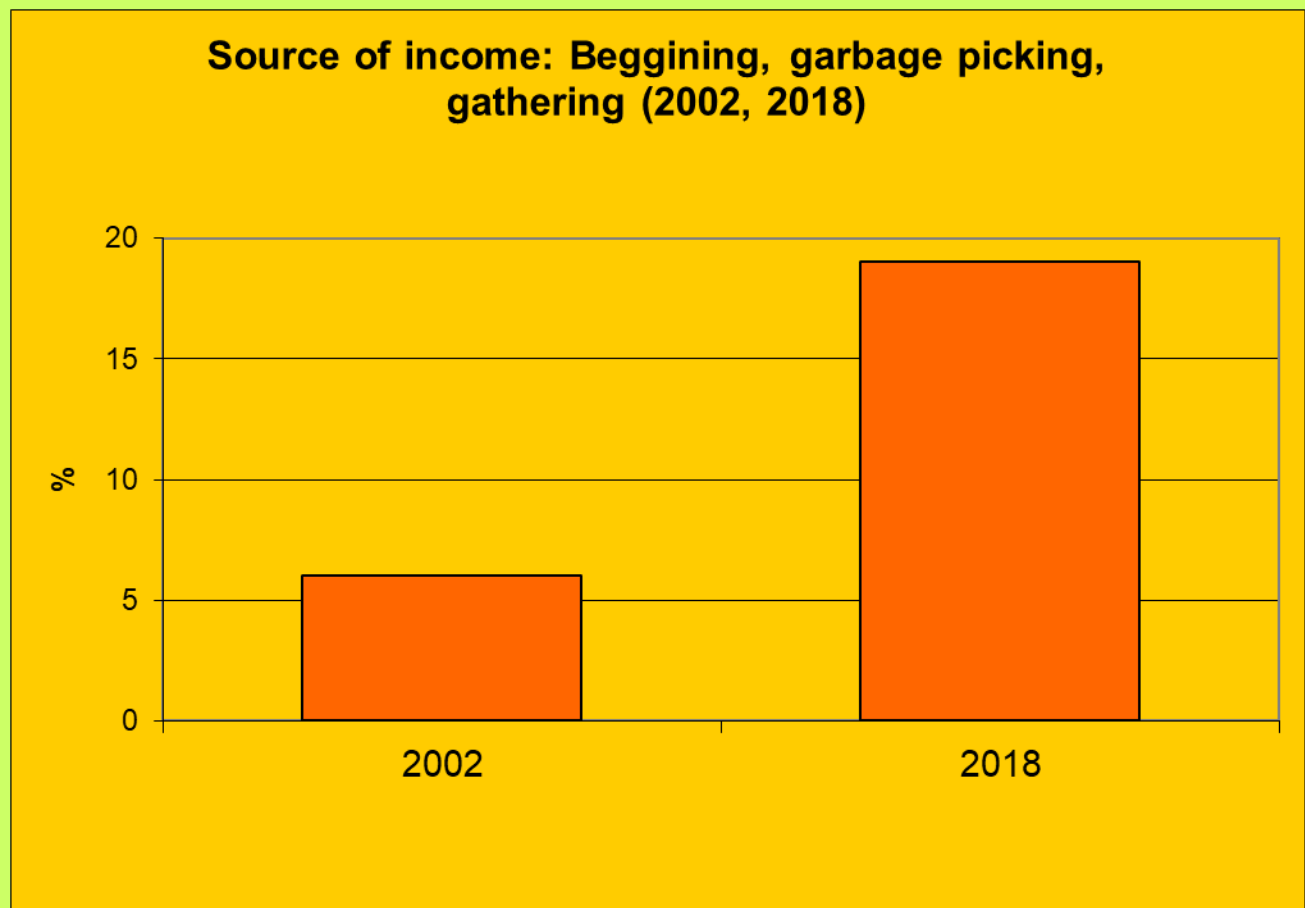
During the past twenty years, the proportion of those **who work regularly** within the homeless population has radically decreased.



During the past twenty years, the proportion of **persons unable to work** has significantly increased (doubled) within the homeless population.



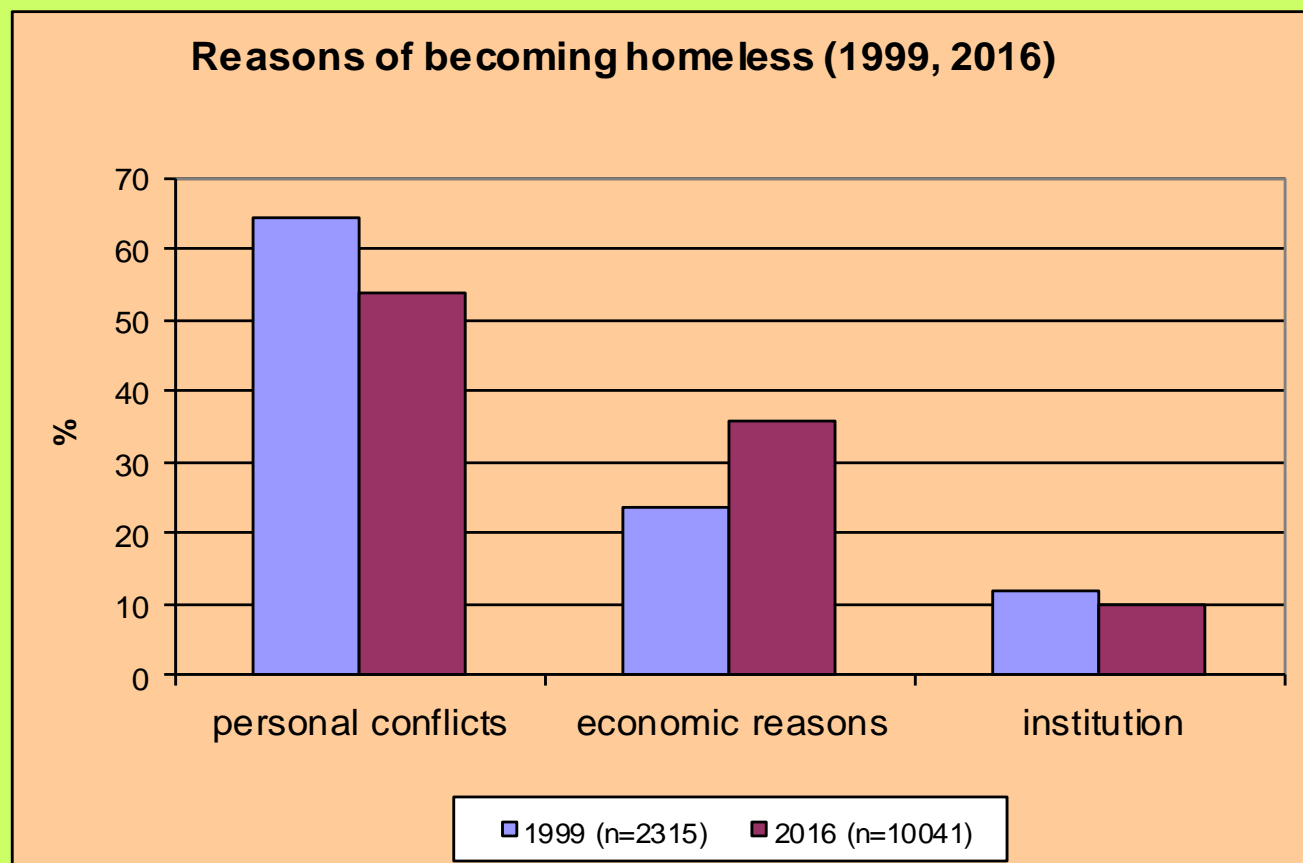
During one and half decades, the **ratio of those begging, garbage picking and gathering** has increased three times within the homeless population.



During the past two decades the **previous housing situation** of the homeless population deteriorated.

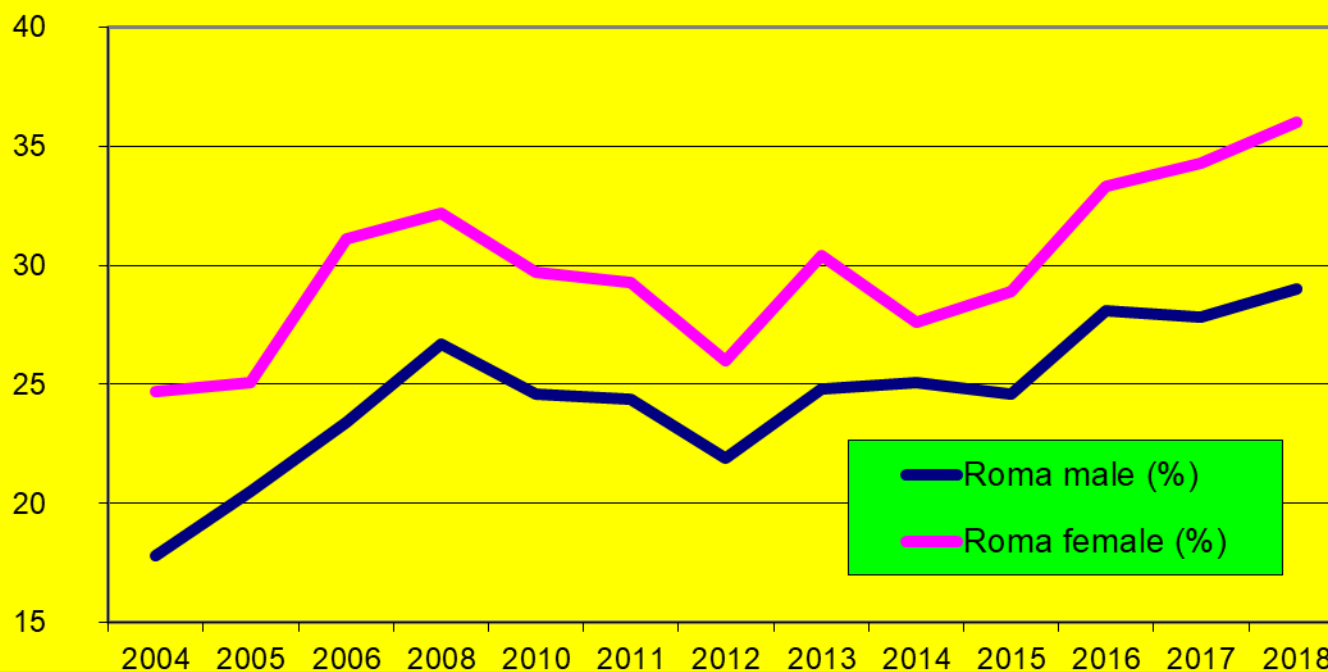


During two decades, the proportion of people **who have become homeless for economic reasons** has increased within the homeless population.



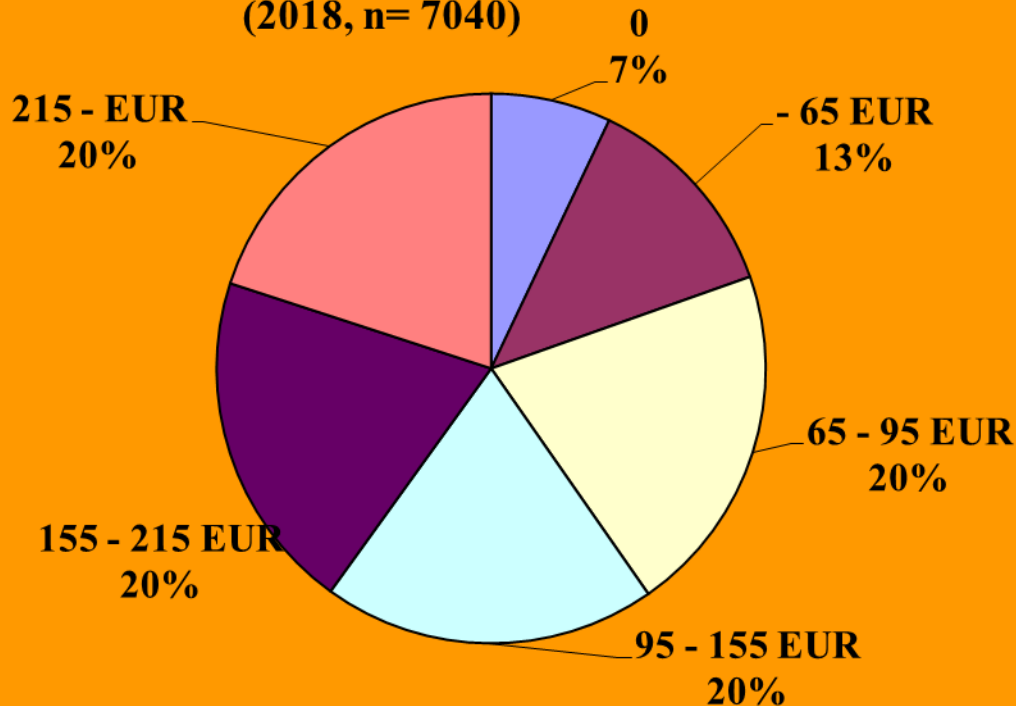
During one and half decades, the proportion of **Roma people** has increased considerably within the homeless population, especially among homeless women.

Proportion of people from Roma origin (2004-2018)

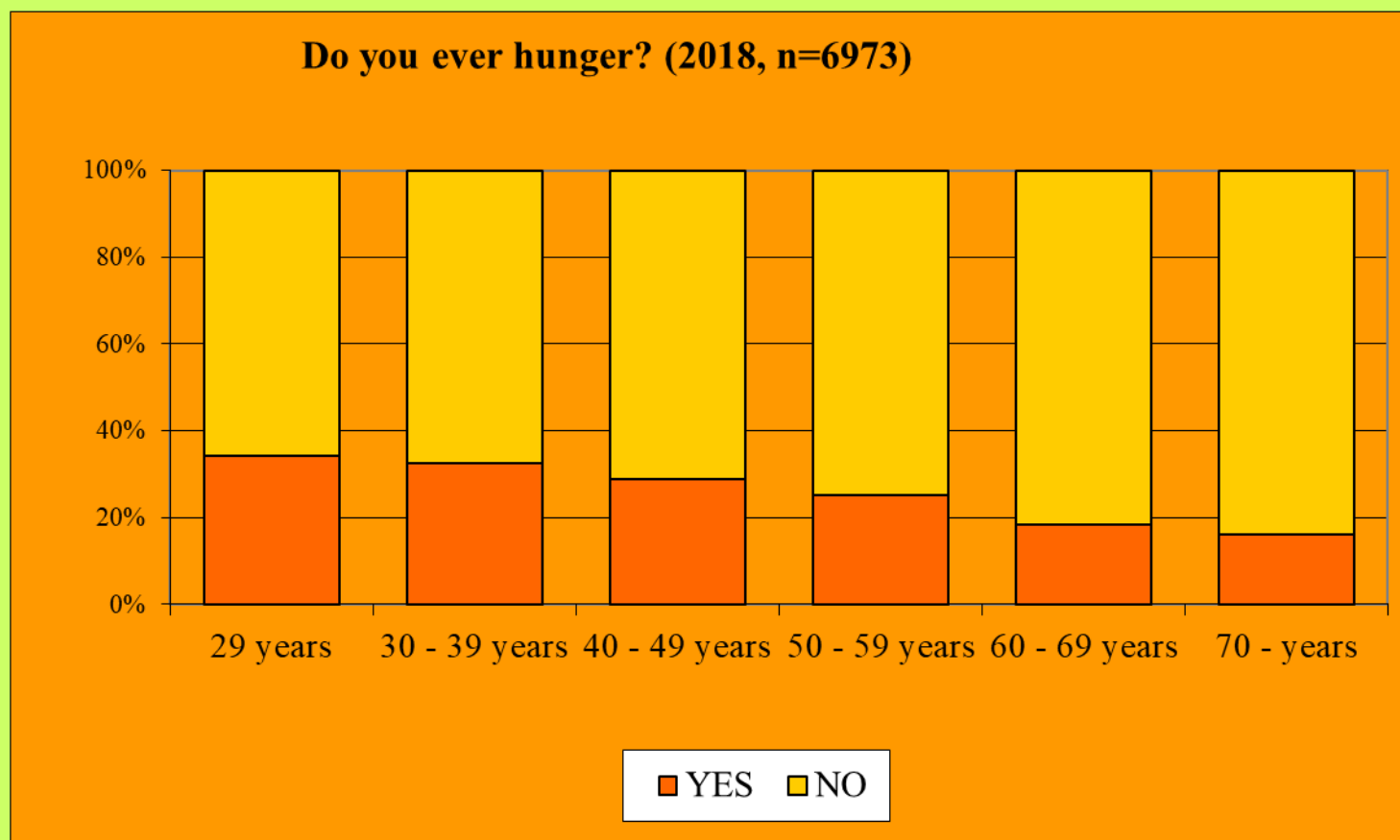


2018: the actual (total) **income of homeless people
does not cover the minimal costs of living.**

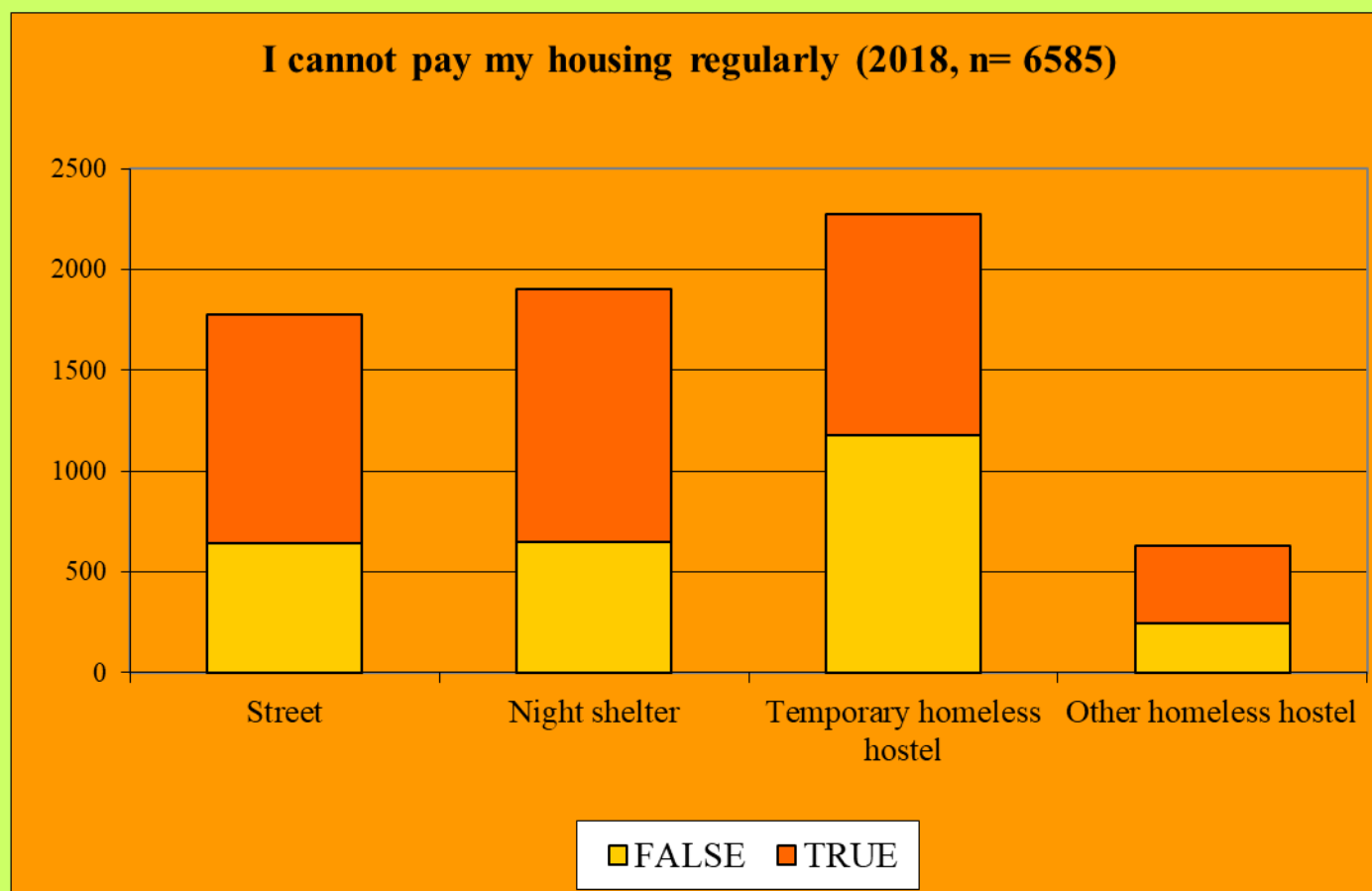
How much money did you have in January?
(2018, n= 7040)



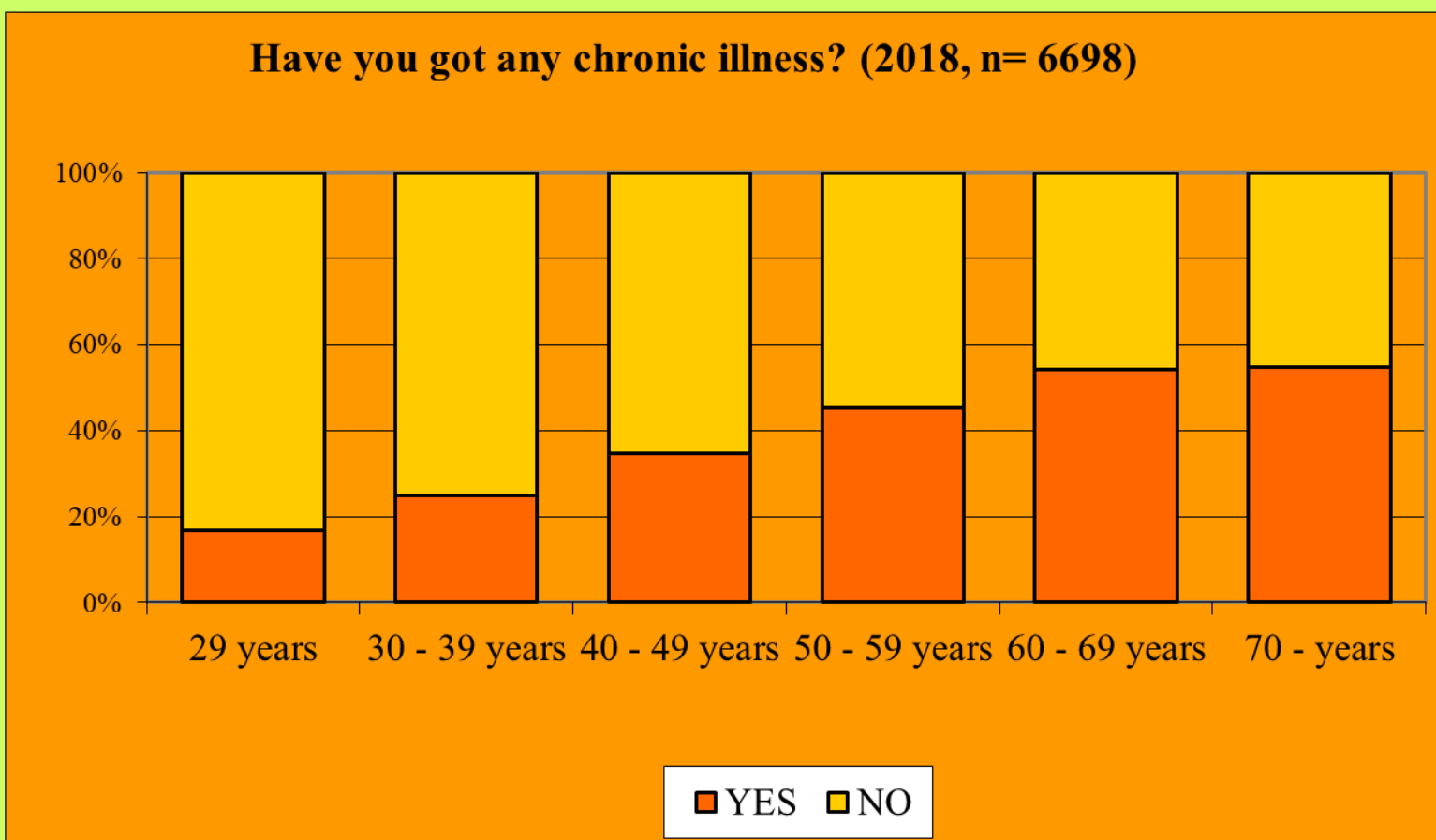
2018: One fifth of homeless people
practically **starve**, especially the younger ones.



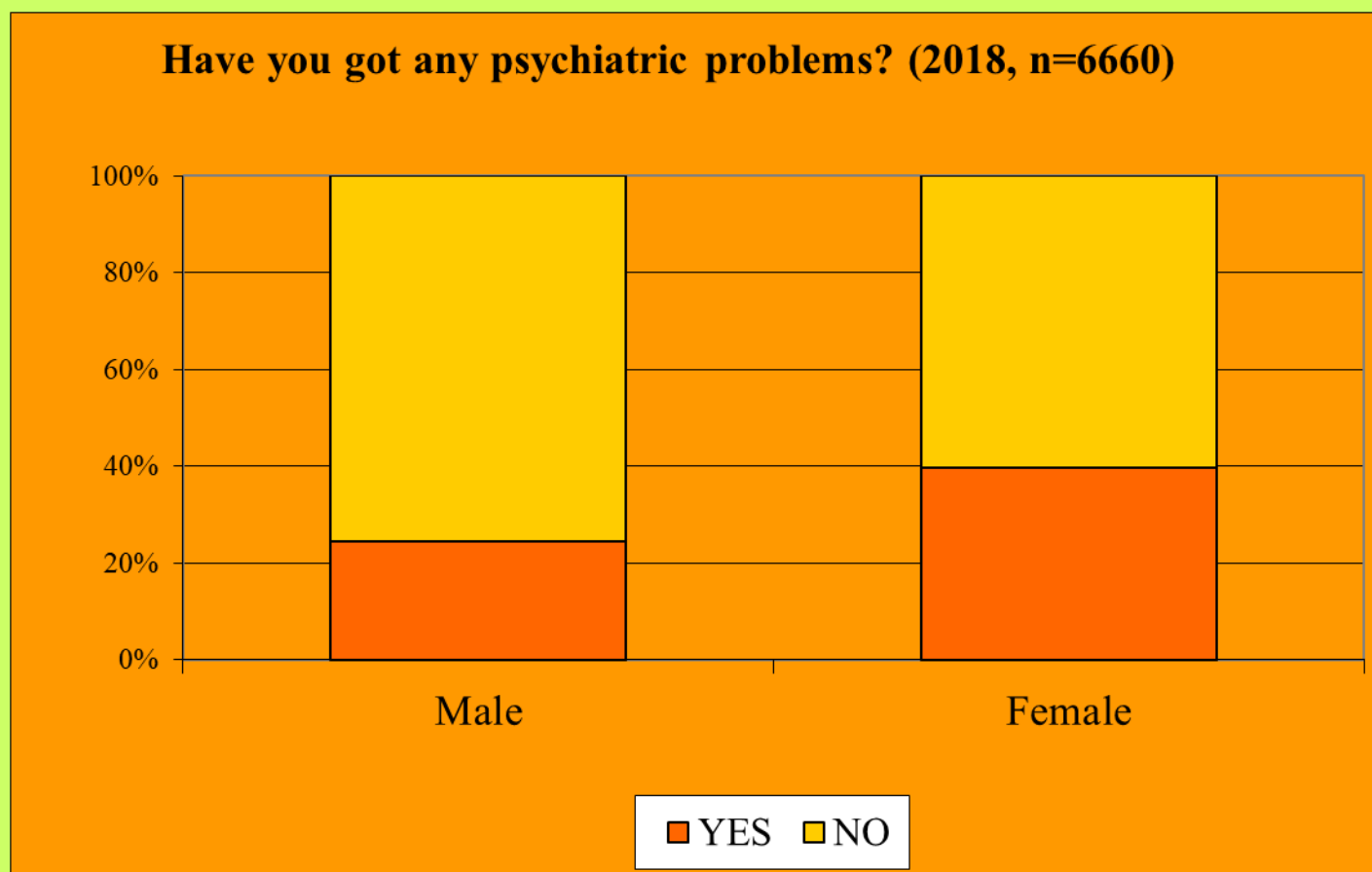
2018: Most homeless people could not maintain independent housing without financial support.



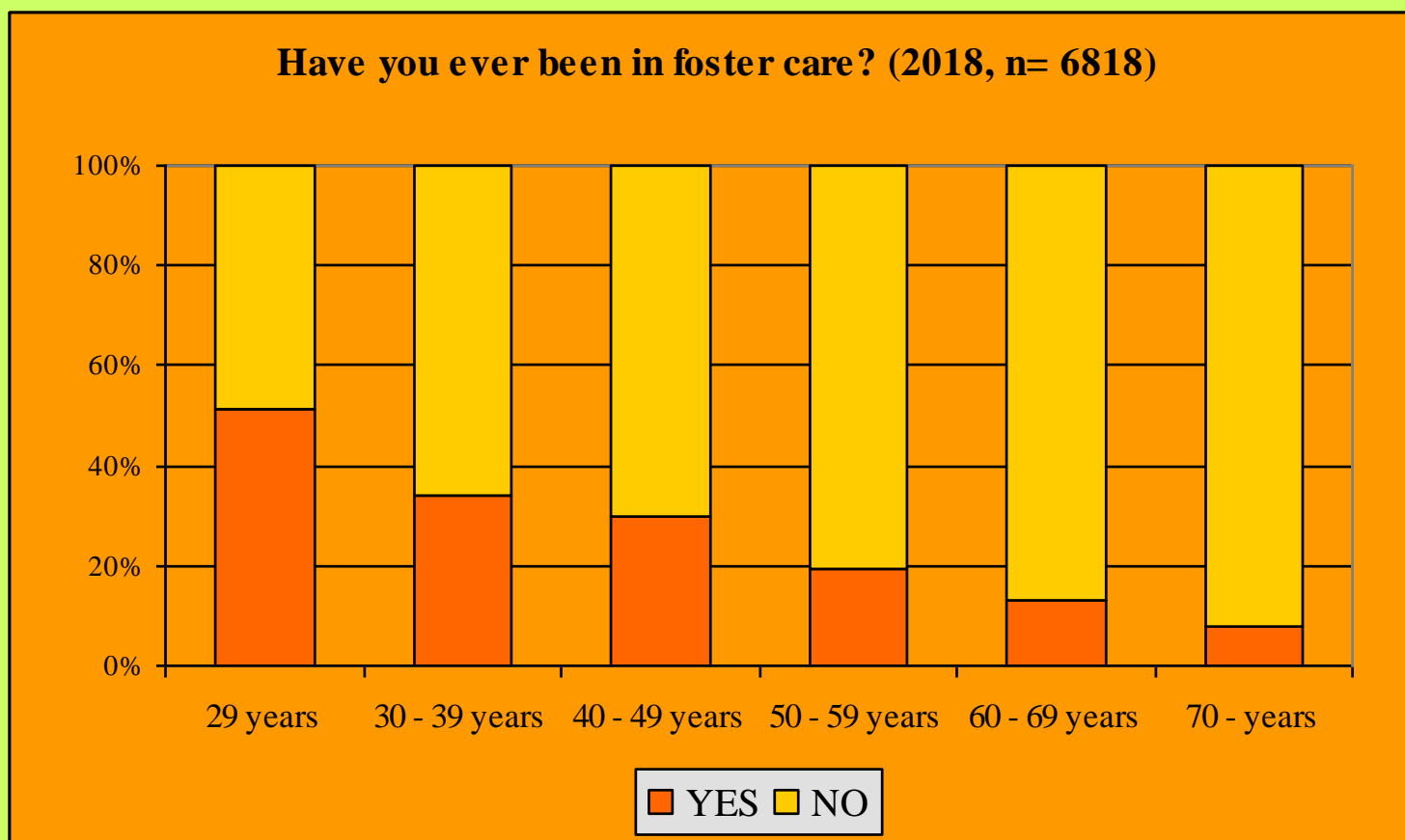
2018: the proportion of homeless people with a **chronic disease is extremely high .**



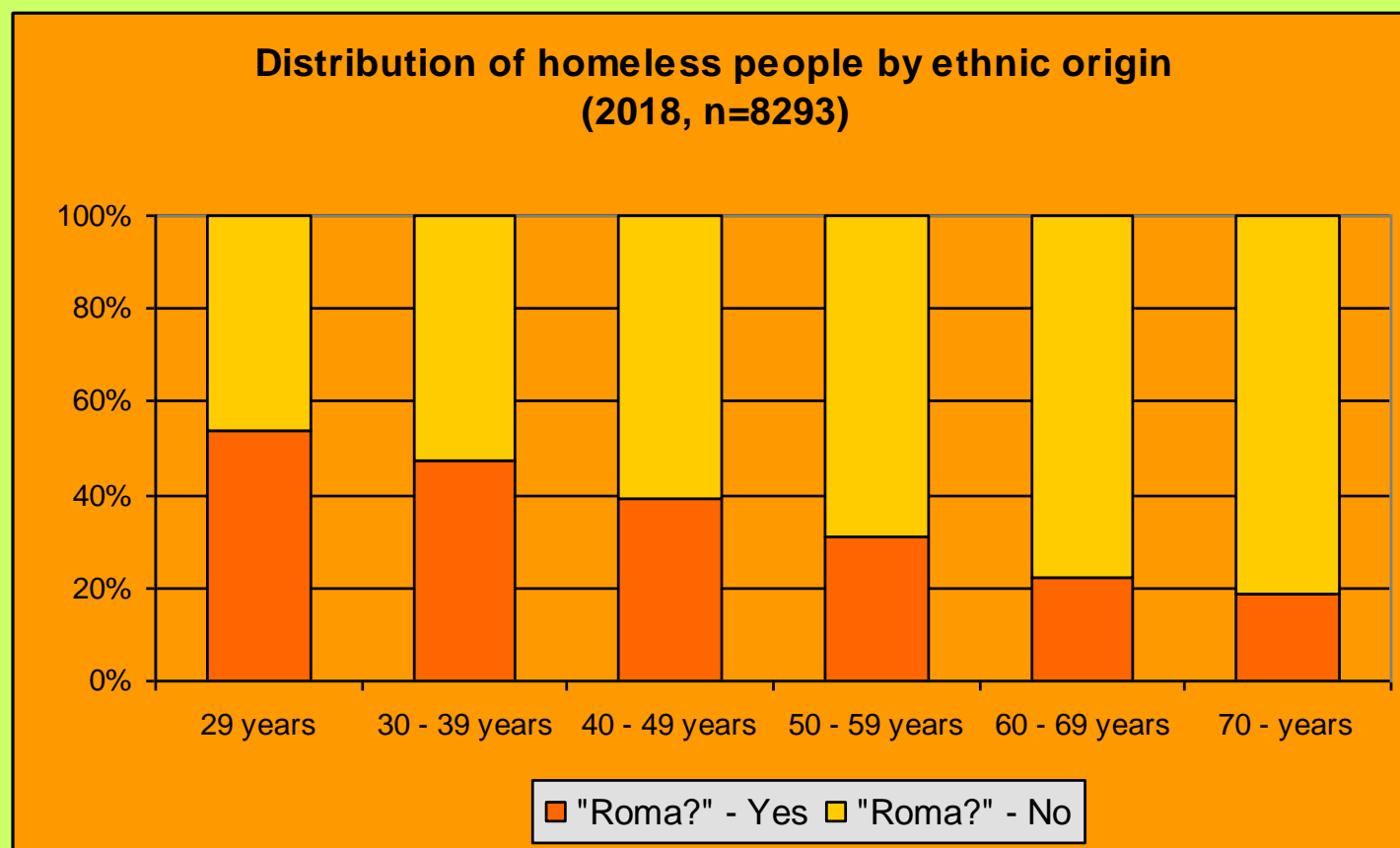
2018: the proportion of homeless people with psychiatric problems is extremely high (especially among women).



**2018: young homeless people
often had a period spent in foster care.**



2018: In the younger age groups of the homeless the proportion of **Roma** is extremely high
(the proportion of Roma in the total population is about 8%).



What do we see behind these changes?

A part of the population is getting behind and is becoming impoverished,
especially the Roma population

Dysfunctions of the educational system (segregation)

Declining settlements (disappearance of jobs, services, exodus)

Closing down or decrease of huge health service systems (psychiatry,
substance abuse, drug prevention and others)

Gaps and inadequacies in the social service systems (financial and service level)

Lack of social housing policy

Lack of support for people with a low income to get housed

Abolishment of housing support for people with a low income to sustain
their housing

Lack of housing support for people in an emergency situation

Disappearance of public (municipal) housing, no new construction

Instead of conclusions

**In a regime where the life of each human individual
does not equally matter,**

even worse, a former secretary of state has said

***„ If someone possesses nothing
is worth nothing"***

solutions to these problems will not be created.

Thank you for your attention.

Thank you for translating, Boróka Fehér (Phd.).