

THE NETHERLANDS

Homelessness Data and Policy

- According to Federatie Opvang, **60,120** people were accommodated by emergency services in 2016, which marked an increase of **11%** between 2011 and 2016.
- **4,000** children were registered as homeless with the local authorities in 2015, **60%** up on 2013.
- The Netherlands is an example of a country which has developed an ambitious homelessness policy and then sabotaged the outcomes in practice by criminalising homeless people. For example, the Netherlands has adopted the use of a local connection to an area or legal residence to refuse access to accommodation. This has been questioned by different decisions of the European Committee of Social Rights such as the Collective Complaint FEANTSA v. the Netherlands.
- Since 2014, the municipalities are required to develop new regional plans where they combine homelessness prevention policies with policies for supported housing for people with mental health care problems, addiction problems or learning difficulties. These regional strategies were supposed to be in place by the end of 2017. Evaluation has taken place and it appears that **only a few regions** have worked out concrete plans.

Housing Exclusion 2016

- The average poor household spends **48%** of their income on housing (this is the **second highest** in Europe behind Denmark). (Here 'poor' means having an average income lower than 60% of the national median income).
- **43%** of poor households spend **more than 40%** of their income on housing. This is higher than the EU average and is higher than countries such as the United Kingdom, Sweden and France. Spending more than 40% of one's income on housing is known as housing cost overburden and is generally regarded as the benchmark above which general welfare and standard of living is threatened.
- The gap between the number of poor and non-poor households overburdened by housing costs widened by 23 percentage points between 2010-2016. This places the Netherlands in **the top 2 worst** countries in terms of housing inequality between poor and non-poor.
- Quality of housing: In some countries like Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden, the proportion of poor households experiencing severe housing deprivation was between 3 and 7%, but this proportion has **increased sharply** over the last six years – by more than **250%** in the Netherlands (**4.3%** in 2016).
- While overcrowding and severe housing deprivation were problems which plagued a massive proportion of the population in Eastern and Central European countries, households in the rest of Europe were **not spared**, with the number of poor households living in overcrowded conditions in the Netherlands **tripling** in the space of six years (**14.6%** in 2016).
- 70% of poor young people aged 18-24 spend more than 40% of their income on housing. This means they are 6.6 times more likely to face housing cost overburden than the total population.