

18th SEPTEMBER, THURSDAY

16h00 – 17h30

SEMINAR SESSION 1 - Participants will be asked to select one of these 6 parallel seminars

Seminar 1: Women and Homelessness (Room: X) - Chair: Nicholas Pleace, UK

Ana María Munizaga Acuña, Chile: Between Two Cities: A Comparative Study of the Living Conditions and Survival Strategies of Women experiencing homelessness in Santiago (Chile) and Barcelona (Spain) and the Public Policy Responses in Both Contexts

The presentation at the 19th European Research Conference is based on a study examining the living conditions of women experiencing homelessness in Santiago (Chile) and Barcelona (Spain). The study has two main objectives: first, to understand the survival strategies of these women, and second, to conduct a comparative review of the public policies targeting this population in both cities.

The theoretical framework of the study is grounded in the human rights approach, which recognizes women experiencing homelessness as full rights holders, emphasizing the importance of ensuring their dignity, security, and access to fundamental rights. The gender perspective is also incorporated to identify the specific issues affecting women, distinguishing them from other homeless groups. Additionally, theories of inequality will be applied to understand how social, economic, and political structures perpetuate their marginalization.

The analysis is approached from an intersectional perspective, identifying similarities and differences between women experiencing homelessness in both urban contexts and how the interaction of various factors contributes to their vulnerability. A comparative analysis of the policies and programs implemented in each city is also conducted, assessing advancements, best practices, and key lessons to improve public interventions.

The methodology includes semi-structured interviews with professionals working directly with this population and a comprehensive document review to contextualize the existing policies and strategies in both contexts.

This study is relevant for its integrated analysis, which deepens the understanding of the reality faced by women experiencing homelessness and their specific needs, offering a comprehensive view of the progress and challenges in public care for this population.



Ana María Munizaga Acuña holds a Master's degree in Social Work from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, a Diploma in Poverty Reduction Strategies from Universidad de Chile, and a Bachelor's degree in Social Work from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. Her expertise includes poverty, public policy, urban development, and homelessness. She presented research on the reconceptualization of homelessness using a radial categories methodology at the Second World Homelessness Conference, organized by the International Journal of Homelessness and the Ruff Institute of Global Homelessness. She is also a senior consultant and researcher in social studies at the national level.

Cristina Lidon Moyano, Emiliano Navarro, Ignasi Oliveras, Isabel Morales, Ignacio Macpherson, Sonia Paz-Cantos, Pere Castellví, Consuelo León-Llorente, ES: Homelessness and Mental Health in Barcelona: A Gender Perspective Study

Background: In Spain, there has been little research on homelessness from a gender perspective. Therefore, the main objective of this project is to analyze the differentiated vulnerability of women living on the streets in Barcelona in terms of substance use and mental health.

Methods: A quantitative longitudinal study including a convenience sample of the homeless population in Barcelona (Spain), with preliminary data from 102 women and 215 men. Recruitment is taking place in shelters and reception centers. Structured surveys collect information using validated scales (anxiety and depression data are gathered using the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-item scale (GAD-7) and the Patient Health Questionnaire 9 (PHQ-9)), as well as self-reported information to measure the study variables. Finally, the prevalence of primary variables, such as mental health disorders, will be calculated. All analyses will adjust for gender perspective

Results: Preliminary results show significant differences between men and women in homelessness regarding mental health. In terms of self-reported diagnoses, women generally show higher prevalence, with the most common being anxiety (38.2%), depression (36.3%), and post-traumatic stress (11.8%). Among men, the most frequently reported diagnoses are depression (16.3%), anxiety (13%), and addictions (6%). On the other hand, among those who did not report a depression diagnosis, 66.7% of women and 57.9% of men might show signs of depression according to the PHQ-9. Similarly, among those who did not report an anxiety diagnosis, 72.6% of women and 55% of men might show signs of anxiety according to the GAD-7.

Conclusions: The results of this project will increase the recognition and scientific evidence of the secondary effects of homelessness. We will be able to work on resources and social strategies tailored to the specific characteristics and needs of women living on the streets.

Keywords: Mental health, homelessness, gender



Dr. Cristina Lidón-Moyano is an adjunct professor at the International University of Catalonia, specializing in Epidemiology, Public Health, and Statistics. She holds a Ph.D. in Health Sciences, Epidemiology, and Public Health from the International University of Catalonia, with postdoctoral research at the University of California, Merced. With over 10 years of experience in epidemiology and public health, her research focuses on addiction, mental health, tobacco control, and screen exposure in children. She leads several doctoral theses and is currently studying the vulnerability of homeless women in terms of addiction and mental health.



Pere Castelví holds a PhD in Psychology and a Master's degree in Public Health and Psychopathology. He is an Associate Professor of Medicine at the Universitat Internacional de Catalunya (UIC) and a researcher specialized in Mental Health Epidemiology, particularly in the promotion of emotional well-being and the prevention of suicide in population-based studies.



Isabel Morales holds a PhD in Humanities and is a professor in the Department of Humanities at UIC. Her area of specialization is Anthropology. In particular, she conducts research on critical readings of naturalism as a framework for understanding the human condition. Her research also focuses on the constitution and nature of habits, explored from both scientific and philosophical perspectives.



Sonia de Paz Cantos is a biologist, epidemiologist, and specialist in healthcare management. She is currently a doctoral researcher at the Universitat Internacional de Catalunya, focusing on the use of screens in the pediatric population. She is passionate about understanding how early interactions with screens can shape developmental trajectories in early childhood.



Dr. Ignasi Oliveras (ORCID: 0000-0002-3082-0355) holds a Bachelor's degree in psychology and a Ph.D. (Autonomous University of Barcelona) in Neuroscience, specializing in animal models of neurodevelopmental disorders. His research has delved into comprehensive investigations of behavioral, pharmacological, and genetic factors related to schizophrenia. Currently, he's working at the International University of Catalonia on a project investigating gender differences in individuals experiencing homelessness. The main objective of this project is to analyze the differentiated vulnerability of women experiencing homelessness in Barcelona in terms of health, mental health, addictions, and the use of healthcare and social resources.



Emiliano Navarro MSc is a doctoral student at the Universitat Internacional de Catalunya, and he is passionate about how statistical analyses can guide decision-making in health.



Consuelo de León holds a PhD in Business Administration from UPC and is currently the Associate Academic Director of the Campus de la Experiencia at UIC. Her main research focuses on the development of public-private social policies related to the labor market, gender, vulnerable groups, and the social inclusion of adults.



Ignacio Macpherson holds a PhD in Biology and Master's in Bioethics. He is a professor in the Faculty of Humanities at the International University of Catalonia (UIC) and a researcher in the field of patient vulnerability.