

## 19<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER, FRIDAY

9h30 – 10h50

SEMINAR SESSION 2 - Participants will be asked to select one of these 6 parallel seminars

### Seminar 11: Trajectories (Room: X) - Chair: Eoin O'Sullivan, IE

#### Philipp Schnell, Judith Schnelzer, AT: Pathways of Homelessness, Housing Transitions, and the Role of Social Services for Mediating Long-Term Housing Solutions

A longstanding research tradition has worked to understand how triggers of homelessness, housing conditions, and personal life-events interact to shape individual pathways of homelessness. However, analyses of long-term pathways into, through and out of homelessness into stable housing, including the succession of different forms of housing during phases of homelessness, seem scarce. Addressing these shortcomings, we researched transitions into homelessness, pathways through phases of homelessness and possible exits into stable housing, through an ex-post qualitative research design. We conducted 20 biographical interviews with persons who have experienced homelessness during their lifetime and are currently living in Vienna. Based on five causal dimensions of homelessness, we analyzed perspectives on transitions between different forms of housing (according to Ethos Light), personal pathways of homelessness and the cooperation with social services in stabilizing housing conditions. From our results we identified different patterns of pathways of homelessness mirrored in a succession of different forms of housing. We traced pathways of persons who experienced homelessness as transitional, episodic or chronic phenomena. The groups differed in their use of services, the interplay of causal dimensions of homelessness, and their ability to combine scarce resources, influencing transitions into permanent housing. Also, they differed in the type and extent of institutional assistance required and the combination of services necessary to enable these transitions. Finally, we drafted a typology of possible pathways of homelessness leading to permanent housing solutions based on the causal dimensions of homelessness, individual triggers of homelessness and identified pathway patterns. In sum, our work puts a new spotlight on the conception of pathways of homelessness adopting a long-term perspective that can help to improve service offers and to better understand the multidimensional issue of homelessness



**Philipp Schnell** is a postdoctoral researcher at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna, where he is specialising on data collection methods on homelessness and precarious housing. He previously published work on lifeworlds of persons experiencing homelessness in Vienna and on novel approaches for researching the transformation of urban spaces. Currently, Philipp is working on a study on life-trajectories of persons formerly experiencing homelessness and is planning the realization of Homelessness Counts in multiple Austrian cities.



**Judith Schnelzer** is a researcher at the Institute for Urban and Regional Research, Austrian Academy of Sciences. Their recent research interests revolve broadly around socio-spatial inequalities of urban development, housing studies, residential displacement, migration, and integration research and visual methods.

#### Veera Niemi, Jarkko Rasinkangas, Aleksi Karhula, Elisabetta Leni, FI: Longitudinal Analysis of Housing Histories and Service Utilization Among the Homeless in Turku, Finland

This study presents a longitudinal quantitative analysis of the housing trajectories and utilization of social and health services among individuals experiencing homelessness in Turku, Finland. Utilizing a dataset integrating national and regional population, social, and health registers, we examine a target group of approximately 400 individuals identified

as homeless in the national homelessness counts of Finland in 2022 and/or 2023. A comparison group consists of non-homeless adult social work clients.

Through sequence analysis, we trace changes in housing tenure, family composition, geographical mobility, and engagement with social and health services over the two decades preceding homelessness. Our research seeks to uncover patterns and turning points in the lives of those who experience homelessness, identifying potential explanatory factors distinguishing their trajectories from those of non-homeless individuals.

Theoretically, our work integrates two strands of homelessness research. Drawing on David Clapham's concept of housing pathways, we emphasize the need for a nuanced understanding of individual agency and constraints in housing markets, particularly among vulnerable populations. While Clapham's framework originally calls for a more constructionist approach, we extend its application to a quantitative, register-based longitudinal analysis. This approach allows us to explore homelessness as a periodic phenomenon embedded within broader housing and life histories, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of housing instability and its determinants.



**Veera Niemi** is a PhD candidate of social work at the University of Turku, Finland. Her research focuses on homelessness, displacement, segregation, gentrification and social work in urban contexts.

**Aleksi Karhula** is a Senior Research Fellow at the INVEST Flagship Centre at the University of Turku. He has extensive expertise in research using register data on various forms of societal inequality, including life course disparities, residential segregation, and educational inequality.

**Jarkko Rasinkangas** is a university lecturer in social work at the University of Turku, Finland. His expertise focuses on welfare inequalities, housing and policies in an urban context, especially segregation and homelessness issues.



**Elisabetta Leni** is a researcher at the Y-Foundation, Finland. After working several years in the non-profit sector in Italy, she obtained a PhD in Economics at the University of Essex, UK. The current focus of her research is on homelessness and social housing.