

19th SEPTEMBER, FRIDAY

14h00 – 15h20

SEMINAR SESSION 4 - Participants will be asked to select one of these 6 parallel seminars

Seminar 19: Measurement Methods III (Room: X) - Chair: Koen Hermans, BE

Hermund Urstad, Hilde Hatleskog Zeiner, NO: The National Survey of Homelessness in Norway – Problems and Solutions

Norway is among the countries in Europe that have the best knowledge about homelessness. This is largely due to the national surveys that have been conducted regularly since 1996. The surveys have also provided the basis for national and local measures and initiatives to combat homelessness for over 20 years. The survey has two purposes, the first is to provide data on the number of homeless people nationally and for the municipalities. Secondly, to gain a better understanding of homelessness and its development over time, i.e., the distribution of chronic and transitional homelessness and the situations described in ETHOS 1-6.

The 2024 survey in Norway has unfortunately been cancelled. For the 2024 survey, all agencies have given approval and exemption from confidentiality, except the Directorate of Labour and Welfare. The Directorate cites problems related to privacy and confidentiality in the social services, as well as requirements in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In addition, there is legal regulation of confidentiality that sets limits on what information can be collected through a survey. This means that employees of the local social services cannot participate in the survey.

As a result, Norway lacks updated information on homelessness. This new situation makes it necessary to look at other approaches. Based on the OECD Monitoring framework we will compare the Norwegian survey with a selection of other countries. The methodology of the count in Norway is a service-based method and very similar to the mappings in Denmark and Sweden. The local city counts in the EU are very relevant, and in Norway Oslo and Bergen also carry out their own surveys. Other approaches may also be possible to use.



Hermund Urstad has worked as Senior Adviser in The Norwegian Housing Bank, the main agency for implementing Norwegian social housing policy on the national level. He has a particular responsibility for homelessness statistics, analyzes and data collection.



Hilde Hatleskog Zeiner is a senior researcher at NIBR, OsloMet. She was a project member in the 2020 survey of homelessness in Norway and is project manager for the 2024 survey.

The national survey of homelessness is initiated by the Housing Bank on behalf of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development. The mapping is being carried out by researchers from Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research NIBR, Oslo Metropolitan University, in close collaboration with the Housing Bank.

Masa Filipovič Hrast, Jera Sernel, Hana Košan, SI: Homelessness Count in Ljubljana

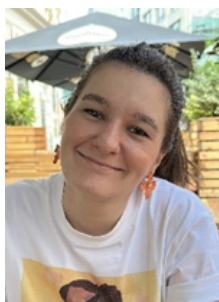
As part of the European Homelessness Count Project, the first comprehensive homelessness count was conducted in

Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia. This study represents a significant advancement in homelessness research in Slovenia, where existing studies have been limited. While some national data are available (see Filipovič Hrast et al., 2023; Dekleva et al., 2010), previous local research has lacked a methodology conducive to broader comparability (e.g., Dekleva & Razpotnik, 2007).

The present study employed a service-based approach, conducting surveys in key services supporting individuals experiencing homelessness in the city. While the count primarily focused on ETHOS categories 1–3, findings revealed that a substantial proportion of respondents fell into ETHOS category 5. This presentation will discuss the key challenges linked to the first implementation of the count and challenges linked to inclusion of ETHOS categories 1 and 5 within the local context. Additionally, we will present key sociodemographic findings on individuals experiencing homelessness in Ljubljana and explore the policy implications of these results. These insights are particularly relevant in the context of preparation of Slovenia's first Strategy for Preventing and Ending Homelessness (2025–2035).



Maša Filipovič Hrast is an associate professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana and is a member of the European Observatory on Homelessness. Her research focuses on homelessness and housing policy as well as social policy.



Jera Sernel is a research assistant at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana. She is actively involved in various (inter)national research projects, including the European Homelessness Counts.



Hana Košan is a president of Association for help and self-help of homeless people - Kings of the Street (Kralji ulice). She is also a higher education associate - assistant professor of Social Pedagogy at the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana. As a research assistant at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana she is involved in European Homelessness Counts.

Lucy Campbell, UK: Making a hidden problem visible: The Women's Rough Sleeping Census in England

In England, women's homelessness is compounded by systemic neglect, with homelessness policies, funding, and services failing to recognise and respond effectively to women's experiences. Due to the constant threat of violence and abuse, women are less visible than men when homeless, and are consequently underrepresented in data and less able to access services and housing.

Over the last three years, charities and researchers have joined forces to design, deliver and scale up a truly innovative action research project – the women's rough sleeping census. The census has collected the largest data set on women's experiences of rough sleeping in Europe, and has amplified women's voices to affect tangible practice change across England.

The census, delivered annually in a growing number of local authorities across England, uses a two-part methodology, co-designed by women with lived experience of homelessness. Firstly, a snapshot survey is undertaken by cross-

sector services with women over a seven-day period. The services are asked to follow gender-informed outreach practices to reach as many women as possible. Secondly, each local authority is asked to bring together cross sector data for women known by different services to be rough sleeping, to build an accurate and inclusive data set.

The census has demonstrated that there are as many as nine times more women rough sleeping than government data shows, and that the ways in which women experience rough sleeping fall outside of the current government definition of rough sleeping in England. The census team are using the results of the research to lobby for changes to the way women's homelessness is recognised and responded to. Recently evidenced as a good practice approach in the OECD's 'Monitoring Framework to Measure Homelessness' report, the census is an innovative and replicable model for collecting data on women's homelessness, that could be of use across Europe. (300 words)



Lucy Campbell is Head of Multiple Disadvantage at the London based charity Single Homeless Project. Lucy has been working in the homelessness sector for 18 years, always with a focus on women's homelessness, and has led on a number of innovative approaches to better meet women's needs, including an award-winning piece of research in collaboration with researchers at the University of York.

Lucy is the lead for the women's rough sleeping census in England, having led on the project since its inception.

Seminar 20: Housing First (Room: X) - Chair: Volker Busch-Geertsema, DE

Riikka Perälä, Saija Turunen & Axel Morgan, FI: From Fidelity to Adaptations: A Qualitative Analysis of Contextual Factors Shaping Housing First

The article looks at the relationship between the Housing First model and different contextual factors. The so-called fidelity research aims at minimizing the influence of context on the Housing First model in order not to compromise the critical ingredients of the model as a homelessness intervention. There is also a wealth of research confirming that high-fidelity Housing First has positive results for clients. The context has, however, also been approached from another direction, namely as a "real world" factor that cannot, and should not, be minimized in policy implementation, as this may exclude important factors that need to be considered. This paper approaches the context from the everyday level of Housing First work and asks 1) what contextual factors related to the implementation of the Housing First model emerge in the practical conduct HF work, 2) how they challenge or support the implementation of Housing First and 3) how the Housing First approach is adapted to address the challenges posed by the context. Empirically, the presentation draws from qualitative focus group interviews (N=8), which describe the perceptions and activities of frontline workers and clients of Housing First gathered from four European countries, Germany, Finland, Ireland and Spain. The data was analyzed by using reflexive thematic analysis. Theoretically, the article builds in Lancione and colleagues (2017) understanding of the context in which the Housing First model is actively adapted to fit the challenges posed by the local context, but at same time adheres to the key principles of the model. On this basis, five contextual factors are identified that influence the work of Housing First in the everyday level of policy implementation and, secondly, the different adaptations that are made to meet the challenges posed by the context.



Dr. Riikka Perälä received her PhD in sociology in 2012 from the University of Helsinki. Her research interests cover the position of vulnerable citizen groups in welfare and housing policies and services. In the homelessness field, she has investigated these issues in the context of Housing First policies and participated also in the development of policies in various expert groups. Currently, she works as a post-doctoral researcher in Y-Foundation, in a European Union funded research project, which investigates the adaptation of Housing First policies in four European countries.



Saija Turunen is the Head of Research at Y-Foundation, Finland where she has worked since 2017. Saija studied and worked in the field of social research in the UK where she founded and ran her own research consultancy as well as taught research methods at the University of Bangor, North Wales after receiving her Ph.D. from there in 2001. Currently Saija co-leads the knowledge development work cluster of the Housing First Europe Hub. Her research interests include impact assessment, women's homelessness as well as subjective well-being.

Caterina Cortese, IT: Tackling homelessness with Housing First Programmes and Personalized Social Support: the HF Italy Experience

What happens after 10 years in a country that decides to adopt Housing First as an intervention model to combat homelessness? This is the case of Italy and the history of the HF network promoted by fio.PSD (Italian Federation of Organizations Working with Homeless People), as well as the guidelines and the first government programmes to fund Housing first and housing led services.

The paper presents the state of development of the HF approach in Italy, results and perspectives that confirm the effectiveness of the intervention model in ending homelessness. Evidence has been gathered through a survey involving a group of HF programmes and two data collection tools: a questionnaire for longitudinal analysis of HF programmes over the ten-year period (75 HF programmes), and an in-depth study of person-centred programmes over the last 24 months (47 HF programmes). The evaluation effort has been to read the monitoring results in coherence with the main indicators used in the national and international literature as well as the 2016 European Guide, such as the integration of HF into the welfare system, housing support and housing stability, promotion and support of health and well-being, development of social ties and integration into the community, harm reduction, cost-effectiveness, the dimension of the right to residence and housing, labour integration, socio-economic integration.

The results suggest that, since 2014, the HF approach has expanded significantly in Italy transitioning from an experimental model to a key element of the social services system with 1.763 HF users and 795 HF apartments in ten years. Results show the high housing quality satisfaction by HF users in terms of habitability and services availability. Personalized plan, housing support, health and wellness support are the main supports offered by the HF team. Fio.PSD's national monitoring has shown that providing safe housing and supporting individual pathways significantly improves the quality of life of beneficiaries, integrating them into society and promoting the well-being of the whole community.



Caterina Cortese is Senior Policy and Research Officer In fio.PSD (Italian Federation of Organisations working with Homeless People), where she carries out studies and social research on homelessness in Italy, housing first programmes, health and social integration, good practices and social innovations for tackling severe marginalization. She is specialized in action-research, policy advice and technical writing activities. From 2022 to 2024 she was a professor of Economic Sociology at the University of Naples "Federico II".

Seda Rass-Turgut, DE: Housing First for Everyone? Challenges and Strategies for an Inclusive Approach in Municipal Homelessness Services

Housing was first implemented in Germany in a field of tension between universal human rights and national social policies (Rosenke 2023). This tension becomes particularly relevant given the rising proportion of foreign nationals among homeless persons in Germany, from 69% (2022) to 80% (2023) (Busch-Geertsema 2024). Drawing on concepts from critical migration research (Hess/Lebhuhn 2014) and rights-based approaches in homelessness services (Haj Ahmad/Busch-Geertsema 2024). This study analyzes the challenges of inclusive implementation of the Housing First approach, examining the relationship between its universal claim and actual accessibility for people without German citizenship.

The analysis employed a multi-perspective research design based on qualitative interviews with experts from municipal institutions (including representatives from the Department of Social Affairs and the Housing Security Coordination Office), homeless service professionals (SKM), migration services staff, and narrative interviews with affected individuals in Osnabrück. This was complemented by a document analysis of municipal policy development.

International implementation of Housing First reveals differing strategies: Finland, often praised as a model example,

has effectively limited Housing First to Finnish citizens, achieving remarkable success in reducing "native" homelessness (Pleace et al. 2015). Portugal, in contrast, pursues an explicitly inclusive approach that systematically incorporates migrants and EU citizens, with its 2017-2023 homelessness strategy explicitly identifying migration as a central challenge and linking Housing First with integration measures (Baptista/Coelho 2021).

The City of Osnabrück exemplifies current challenges: the number of foreign assistance seekers has increased by 65 percent between 2018 and 2022 (Stadt Osnabrück 2023). The situation of homeless people from EU countries is exacerbated by legal barriers such as the "EU Citizens Social Welfare Exclusion Act". International research confirms that Housing First's success depends significantly on effectively including marginalized groups (Lancione, 2024). Experiences from Portugal and other Southern European countries demonstrate that inclusive implementation is possible under difficult economic conditions when political will exists (Baptista/Marlier 2019).

The paper develops concrete recommendations for diversity-sensitive implementation, including multilingual access pathways, culturally sensitive case management, sustainable cooperation with migrant communities, intercultural qualification of professionals, and strategies for discrimination-sensitive housing acquisition. These practice-oriented approaches can guide municipalities and NGOs toward successful Housing First implementations that systematically address the changing demographic reality of homelessness.



Prof. Dr. Seda Rass-Turgut is Professor for Diversity and Social Work at HAWK University of Applied Sciences in Hildesheim/Holzminden/Göttingen, Germany. From 2012-2024, she worked for the City of Osnabrück, serving as an Integration Commissioner and later as Head of the Social Affairs Department. She established a municipal office for housing security and prevention, funded by the EU program "EhAP Plus". She initiated a paradigm shift in Osnabrück from temporary accommodation to long-term housing through the housing-first approach. Her research focuses on migration and municipal research, including international perspectives on homelessness and social exclusion.

Seminar 21: Mortality of People Experiencing Homelessness (Room: X) - Chair: Lars Benjaminsen, DK

Magdalena Mostowska, Ewelina Biczynska, Mateusz Słomski, PL: Exploring the Data on Homeless Mortality in Poland

There is growing recognition of health disparities and homelessness being particularly detrimental to health outcomes and increased mortality. However, data on the health and deaths of people experiencing homelessness are scarce and prone to selectivity and bias.

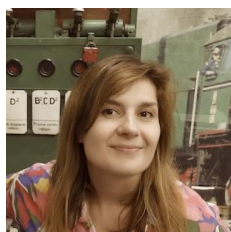
This paper examines the administrative data that could be used to estimate mortality among people experiencing homelessness in Poland. Linking administrative data has become a state-of-the-art method in homelessness research. The paper presents challenges of working with the available data and the caveats that the current data collection system entails with regards to homelessness.

We used a dataset of social assistance recipients in Poland. Only for a small part of the population receiving benefits due to homelessness was it possible to retrieve personal numbers and match them with the death register. Other deaths were identified based on municipal burials recorded in the database and an algorithm that calculates the probability of death based on entries with the same date of birth, gender, and municipality in the population register. We identify at least 1300 deaths per year of people who received benefits in the 12 months prior to death. The mean age at death in 2022 was 57.2 (SD=11.9). In 2022, the crude mortality rate CMR=3.39 and the standardized mortality ratio SMR=3.35 (driven mainly by the elevated SMRs for people under 50 years of age). Finally, the paper presents aggregate data on municipal burials. Urban municipalities have 4 times more such burials per capita than rural ones, which can be explained by more services, but also by weaker family ties.

The paper concludes by addressing the main shortcomings of the collection and sharing of registry data in Poland and their consequences for homelessness research.



Magdalena Mostowska is a sociologist, lecturer, and researcher at the Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies at the University of Warsaw. She has completed several research projects on migrant and women's homelessness in Poland, the EU, and the US.



Ewelina Biczynska is a sociologist and a geographer, teaching at the Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies at the University of Warsaw. Her main scientific interests revolve around spatial justice, social and urban transformations, and social problems, especially in Latin America. She has been involved in several scientific projects about changes and development in Latin-American cities and regions. She also has over 12 years of experience in quantitative market research.

Mateusz Słomski is a mathematician and works as a senior specialist at Statistics Poland. His works focuses on transforming administrative registers into statistical datasets, especially in the field of social policy: social support and education.

Daniel C. Farrell, Ashwin Parulkar, Tina Goodrich, Steve McFeely & Danielle Devine, USA: Responding to Mortality Risks of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Tenants in New York City

Scholarship and reportage have confirmed that mortality rates among single adult Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) tenants are unacceptably high (Eagen, 2023; Henwood et al., 2015; Raven et al., 2020). Scholars have identified high rates of chronic health conditions, substance use problems, and unmet medical needs among individuals experiencing homelessness before transitioning to PSH as significant contributing factors to these mortality rates (Henwood et al., 2015; Raven et al., 2020).

Critical Time Intervention (CTI), a model based on intensive client engagement during crucial phases of the service delivery process, has increased housing stability for PSH tenants but has never been used to decrease mortality (Herman et al., 2007, 2010). To address these gaps, HELP USA implemented CTI with over 200 single adult PSH tenants—including over 80 in recently leased units—from February 26, 2024, to February 25, 2025, aiming to decrease mortality and increase social connectedness and positive health outcomes. The program resulted in lower mortality rates compared to those previously observed in PSH tenants in Philadelphia and persons experiencing homelessness in New York City (Table 1).

Table 1: Comparative Mortality Rates: PSH & Populations Experiencing Homelessness (PEH)

Population	Crude Mortality Rate*	Person Years [^]
PSH - Philadelphia	3916	1045
PEH-NYC ('90-'08)	2170	-
PEH-NYC ('22-'23)	2144	16558
PSH single adults- HELP (high risk)	1892	159
PSH single adults- HELP	1099	729

*Crude mortality rate is the number of deaths per person year in a population of 100,000. [^]Person years is the period of time (in years) that a sample population is observed for a study period. Person years for HELP PSH clients is derived from February 26, 2024, to November 26, 2024, for 222 clients, inclusive of exits, such as deaths. The presentation will include analysis of 12 months of data. Bold = $p < 0.01$ compared to Philadelphia PSH population (Henwood et al., 2015). Note: Data on PEH-NYC ('90-'08) refers to middle-aged men and is also from Henwood et al. (2015). The mortality

rate of PEH-NYC ('22-'23) refers to middle-aged men. HELP Research calculated this rate based on local and federal government data (HUD, 2023; DOHMH, 2024).

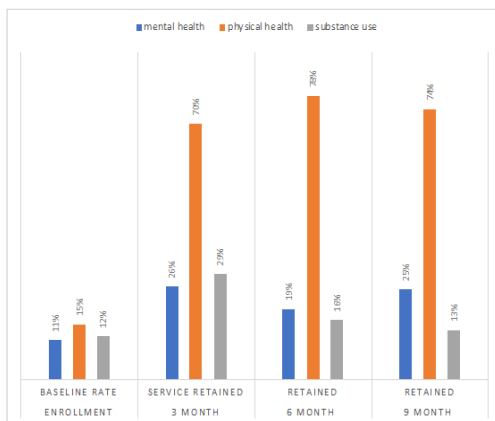
This talk will cover three topics:

1. Assessing Mortality Risks of PSH Clients

HELP USA designed a point-based risk assessment tool that screens for chronic physical conditions, chronic homelessness histories, incarceration experiences, and demographic characteristics associated with mortality. All clients are provided enhanced services. However, the program additionally tracks outcomes of clients at or above a minimum risk score to ascertain factors indicating the highest needs.

2. Implementing Enhanced Services

We will discuss how enhanced services are provided and measured across the following areas: early client engagement, social support, client visits, and healthcare coordination.



3. Impact Evaluation

We will discuss how researchers and clinicians worked together to track the performance of the CTI service model every three months for one year from the start of the program. This includes tracking the impacts of enhanced wellness checks and retention in social support work groups, healthcare programs, and substance use services on mortality rates. HELP USA will present early findings from the program, such as the impacts of enhanced services on significantly increasing access to critical physical and mental health care services (Figure 1). In this context, a clinician will discuss strategies for responding to high-risk clients through the appropriate provision of enhanced services.

Figure 1: Effects of Enhanced Engagement on PSH Single Adult Clients "in Need" of Services (February 26, 2024 – November 26, 2024)

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Tina Goodrich has 25 years of experience in the fields of affordable housing administration and homeless service delivery. Most of her initial experience in government subsidized housing and services came during her nine-year tenure at MBD Community Development Corporation in the Bronx. Tina currently serves as the Vice President for Supportive Housing and Services for HELP USA's permanent supportive housing program and services located in the Greater New York City area and Long Island. Tina has a BA from CUNY Brooklyn College and Master of Arts in Urban Affairs from CUNY Queens College. She also serves as Board Vice-Chairperson at The Institute of Family Health, a Federal Qualified Health Care non-profit organization providing quality patient centered primary care to those in underserved communities.



Danielle Devine holds a Master's degree in Social Work (Adelphi University, NY) and a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology (Queens College, NY). Danielle has over 10 years of clinical experience with working with diverse populations living with mental health issues, substance abuse, and serious medical ailments. During Danielle's career she assisted to pilot a successful aftercare program for veterans who could not access services at their local VA (Veterans Administration). The program heavily focused on utilizing CTI (Critical Time Intervention) to render services to the veterans. She currently holds a license for Master of Social Work in New York State. Danielle believes in expansion of services and advocacy for marginalized and vulnerable populations. Danielle is currently an Executive Director in NYC for homeless service provider HELP USA. She oversees operations for multiple social service programs in permanent housing.

Ashwin Parulkar is the Associate Vice President of Research at HELP USA (New York City).

Daniel C. Farrell is the Chief Operating Officer at HELP USA (New York City).

Seminar 22: Prevention of Youth Homelessness Based on Work with the Family (Room: X) - Chair: Eoin O'Sullivan, IE

Sarah Sheridan, IE: Youth Family Mediation in Preventing Youth Homelessness: The Importance of Early Intervention

Family conflict has been identified across numerous research studies as a leading cause of homelessness among young people, often overlapping with structural disadvantages such as poverty, parental unemployment, experiences of care or residential instability, early school disengagement and/or unresolved support needs such as mental health. Youth family mediation services aim to reduce the overall severity of family discord, offering a structured environment where disputes can be resolved swiftly with the goal of repairing communication and enabling reconciliation between family members. While there is relatively limited research evidence on whether youth family mediation services effectively prevents youth homelessness, the data on school-based interventions that have emerged through Geelong Project and Upstream Cymru, for example, offers compelling results when twinned with a screening process that identifies young people at heightened risk of homelessness.

Focus Ireland Youth Family mediation was established in 2016 and has since supported more than 150 young people and their families in the Dublin region, receiving referrals primarily through child protection and community-based services. This paper presents findings from an evaluation of the service, drawing on qualitative interviews with families and stakeholders as well as an analysis of service level data. The evaluation found positive results in terms of enhanced communication, conflict de-escalation, continued engagement in school and, for some young people, reducing the likelihood to leave home prematurely. It also demonstrated effective and positive interagency collaboration between child protection and homeless services. The evaluation signalled when mediation was provided at an early point – i.e. before a conflict has escalated to 'crisis' levels – optimum results were achieved. This strongly suggests that if youth family mediation is to be scaled up to avert more young people from entering homelessness, families should be targeted at an earlier point – ideally well before they come to the attention of child protection or homeless services.



Dr Sarah Sheridan is an Independent Researcher specialising in homelessness and service evaluations. Her PhD focused on women's experiences of homelessness in Ireland. She is a Visiting Research Fellow in the School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin. Previously she worked in research management positions in Focus Ireland and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. She is a board trustee in the tenant support charity Threshold.

Nia Rees, UK: "It Started at Home": A Critical Examination of Family Mediation as an Intervention to Prevent Youth Homelessness

This paper is part of a wider study which critically examines a highly dominant, yet under-researched approach to the prevention of youth homelessness – mediation, a political priority in Wales and the global north. Dominant service

responses have received limited academic scrutiny within international literature. This study begins to address this fundamental gap by critically examining mediation as an approach to youth homelessness prevention. Mediation services seek to support young people and their families to bridge differences that risk unplanned exits from home. Fundamental to the approach is the maintenance/re-establishment of ties with family, aiming to prevent homelessness. This paper draws upon findings from participatory research undertaken in the case study country of Wales, addressing this fundamental gap in understanding. It focuses upon in-depth biographical interviews and an innovative network activity with young people at risk of homelessness, who have experienced family mediation. Semi-structured interviews with mediation workers also drawn upon to comprehend the inner workings and complexities of mediation. Focusing upon themes of conflict, care, networks and home, this paper offers a rare critique of the emerging homelessness prevention paradigm - challenging the conceptualisation of prevention by considering the importance of the extent to which interventions enable ontological security and feeling of 'home'. In addition to offering insights into the way in which relationships, connections and network interactions are re-established through the processes of mediation for young people at risk of homelessness. It employs the notion of the 'dark side of home' and Adverse Childhood Experiences to uncover the role of unmaking home in the lives of the young people undertaking family mediation. It fills a gap in research within housing/youth studies by critiquing this intervention, innovatively drawing upon these concepts. By critiquing the dominant intervention mechanism of mediation, this research has direct implications for service provisions in Wales and internationally.



Dr Nia Ffion Rees, Independent Housing Research Consultant/ Lecturer, School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University is an Independent Research Consultant; and a Lecturer at Cardiff University. Her areas of interest lie within housing insecurity, homelessness, youth studies, and inequality. Her recent PhD examines the dominant responses to tackling youth homelessness – mediation, offering a rare critique of this intervention mechanism. Nia has undertaken research at a global and local level in Tanzania, Peru and Wales, with impact on service provision for homeless young people. Nia appreciates the contributions of service users/peer researchers, uplifting their voices through participatory research. Nia is an active member of the Housing Studies Association and works closely with IJOH, End Youth Homelessness Cymru; Youth Experiential Learning Simulation Wales; Canadian Observatory on Homelessness.

Seminar 23: Social Support Networks (Room: X) - Chair: Nicholas Pleace, UK

Karen Corbett, Gloria Puchol-Ros, Juan Manuel Rodilla, ES: Informal Support Networks and Homelessness in Spain: A Quantitative Study on Social, Health, and Economic Determinants

Homelessness and informal support in Spain present significant challenges to social inclusion and housing stability. The 2008 financial crisis deepened social exclusion, worsening housing loss and weakening social ties. Informal networks provide nearly 80% of long-term care due to insufficient state coverage, yet their role in mitigating homelessness remains underexplored.

This study analyses informal support networks among 203 homeless individuals assisted by transitional housing programs managed by San Juan de Dios Valencia, Spain, examining how sociodemographic, health, and economic conditions influence these networks. Using a quantitative longitudinal design, data was collected from 2021 to 2024 through entry and exit records and follow-up two years post-exit. Regression models identified key predictors of informal support development.

Preliminary findings indicate that individuals with stable social contacts upon entering the program are more likely to maintain housing after exit (65% vs. 37%, $p < 0.05$). Additionally, those with chronic health conditions tend to rely more on informal caregivers (68%) but face greater barriers in securing stable support, leading to a higher risk of housing instability (41%). The results also suggest that longer duration of homelessness is associated with weaker informal support networks, while those with some level of economic income (e.g., subsidies, informal work) are up to 40% more likely to maintain functional support networks compared to those with no income.

This study contributes to the understanding of informal social support as a crucial factor in homelessness interventions and advocates for integrated policies that strengthen both informal and formal support mechanisms. The findings align with European housing-led approaches and homelessness prevention strategies. By addressing the role of informal networks, this research provides insights into improving social policies, intervention strategies, and long-term housing stability for homeless populations.



Karen Corbett Lagos holds a Master's degree in Management and Promotion of Local Development (University of Valencia), a Master's degree in Science and Innovation Management (Polytechnic University of Valencia), and a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration (Austral University of Chile). She has 14 years of experience promoting entrepreneurship and innovation in Latin America, and she is currently a doctoral candidate at INGENIO (CSIC-UPV) and her research focuses on the role of higher education in fostering competencies for development and innovation. She is also part of the research team at Sant Joan de Déu Valencia, where she conducts research on social innovation.



Gloria Puchol-Ros holds a degree in Economics and a Master's degree in Development Cooperation from the Polytechnic University of Valencia. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Social Sciences at the University of Valencia and is also the Research Department Coordinator at Sant Joan de Déu Valencia (Spain). In recent years, her research has primarily focused on evaluating the effectiveness of interventions for homeless individuals through longitudinal studies. She has explored this complex issue through various theoretical frameworks, including the capability approach and emerging theories on homelessness. Her work aims to find innovative ways to address homelessness and inform evidence-based practices.



Juan Manuel Rodilla Navarro is an Industrial Engineer, holds a PhD in Social Sciences, and has a Master of International Affairs from Columbia University. He works as the Director of Social Intervention and Innovation at Sant Joan de Déu Valencia and as an associate professor at the Polytechnic University of Valencia. His research focuses on the application of monitoring and evaluation structures to improve the effectiveness of care mechanisms for vulnerable populations. He has a decade of experience coordinating development, social, and humanitarian projects in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America with organizations such as San Juan de Dios, Doctors Without Borders, and the United Nations.

Max Huber and Meta de Lange, NL: Improving the Social Network of Homeless People in the Netherlands. A study on Network Support Provided by Shelter Organizations

In the past decade, the Netherlands has witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of homeless individuals, with figures doubling according to recent statistics (CBS, 2021). This alarming trend underscores the growing urgency to support this vulnerable population. While the main approach to homelessness is 'housing first'—prioritizing housing provision to homeless people—there is a growing recognition that this strategy alone is insufficient. In addition to the major housing shortage, many individuals who have been housed experience profound loneliness and a lack of self-reliance in their daily lives. That is why Dutch shelter organizations are now adopting an innovative network support approach in their care for people who experience homelessness. This approach seeks to empower clients by engaging and enhancing their social networks.

In our two-year qualitative research project 'Social Network First?' we investigated the implementation of network support for homeless people in the Dutch cities of Amsterdam and Haarlem. To gain a comprehensive understanding of this approach and its impact on the empowerment of homeless people, we conducted 53 semi-structured interviews with homeless individuals, their relatives and friends, social workers, and other relevant professionals. We build forward on theoretical insights about social ties (e.g. Granovetter, 1973) and empowerment (e.g. van Regenmortel, 2011), while taken into account the knowledge on network support from the context of mental health care (e.g. Tjaden, 2022).

Our research demonstrates the significant role of network support in enhancing the well-being of homeless individuals. The findings highlight numerous instances of increased social connectedness, practical and emotional support, and improved self-esteem because of greater involvement within the social network. At the same time, our study shows that implementing network support faces multiple challenges on different levels. In our presentation, we will shed a light on what network support consists of and which challenges need to be tackled to foster the empowerment of homeless people.



Dr. M.A. (Max) Huber has been working as a senior researcher at HVO-Querido since 2019. Prior to that, he worked for many years at the Hogeschool van Amsterdam. Max earned his PhD with research on empowerment processes in self-managed social shelter. He has extensive experience in leading and conducting participatory, practice-oriented research. Recently he joined the Utrecht University of applied sciences as a senior researcher.



Meta de Lange has been working as a researcher and lecturer at the Urban Social Work research group since 2018. She has worked as a social worker and researcher on various social projects.

Seminar 24: Trauma Informed Care in Service Provision (Room: X) - Chair: Lia van Doorn, NL

Tessa Hagen, Kim Nieuwburg, NL: The Effects of Implementing Trauma-Informed Care: A New Integrated Approach within De Regenboog Groep

Research has shown that individuals who are homeless are likely to have experienced some form of previous trauma; homelessness itself can be viewed as a traumatic experience and being homeless increases the risk of further victimization and retraumatization. The same is true for refugees and displaced people. For both groups, services have provided care to traumatized people without directly acknowledging or addressing the impact of trauma. Therefore three pilot locations of De Regenboog Groep are making the shift towards Trauma-Informed Care (TIC). TIC offers a framework for providing services to traumatized individuals within a variety of service settings.

The pilot locations serve different target groups. First location is a walk-in center for homeless EU workers who face challenges like aggression and mental health deterioration. Second location is a temporary housing project to prevent long-term homelessness, combining housing with support services. Third location is a semi-permanent shelter for Ukrainian refugees, providing shared living spaces and daily support to buffer the effects of war and assist with practical issues.

This research monitors the effects of the implementation of TIC through qualitative research. This qualitative research is performed through surveys on the items of (I) Supporting staff development, (II) Creating a safe and supportive environment, (III) Assessing and planning services, (IV) Involving consumers and (V) Adapting policies. Additionally focus groups are held with professionals and consumers of the services.

As we know trauma is omnipresent in the lives of the people that we seek to support, we see this project and research as a chance to improve the quality of our services and the overall wellbeing



Tessa Hagen is the Program Coordinator for social work at De Regenboog Groep. With over 20 years of experience in the social domain, she has worked with a wide range of client groups, including those facing trauma, addiction, and mental health challenges. For the past three years, she has been dedicated to supporting people experiencing economic homelessness, focusing on access to housing and social support. Tessa is committed to implementing trauma-informed practices, ensuring that staff and services are equipped to respond effectively to trauma-related challenges. Her expertise lies in bridging policy and practice to create sustainable support structures.



Kim Nieuwburg is the Program Coordinator for refugee shelters at De Regenboog Groep. From the start she has been involved in creating a safe environment for Ukrainian refugees. First as a shelter manager and now in a more coordinating role. In this key role in coordinating the shelter locations, she is involved in both policy and operational issues. Therefore being able to identify needs and potential improvements. Next to initiating this transition to a more trauma informed approach, she advocates for diversity, equity and inclusion.

Eszter Somogyi, Nóra Teller, Alena Vachnova, Noémi Vajdovich and Elena Zagorova, HU/SK: Integrated Health and Social Service Delivery: A Needs Assessment Among Clients of Homeless Services in Central and Eastern Europe

The SOLACE-CEE project seeks to enhance access to health services for vulnerable populations across five Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries—Slovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Poland. As part of the project's impact assessment framework, data collection and analysis activities have been designed to evaluate the effectiveness of local pilot initiatives and their contribution to integrated service delivery. This study presents the preliminary findings from the project's needs assessment phase, examining the conditions under which local initiatives are being implemented and their alignment with client needs. The project is funded by the European Commission through the call focusing on Social innovation practices to combat homelessness (ESF-2023-HOMELESS).

Research Objectives and Methodology

The monitoring and evaluation strategy within the SOLACE-CEE project has been co-developed to achieve multiple objectives: to provide an empirical foundation for understanding the contextual landscape in which integrated services are designed and implemented, to assess and adapt service provision to better address client needs in local integrated hubs, to facilitate a systematic and meaningful evaluation of project processes and progress, and last but not least, to align needs assessment findings with a tailored evaluation framework that informs service development strategies.

The needs assessment phase, conducted from April to June, is based on a sample of 205 persons experiencing homelessness (PEH), comprising both households and single individuals across Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, and Hungary. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating quantitative data collection on demographics, housing trajectories, homelessness experiences, health literacy, and service access needs.

These data are further contextualized through qualitative research engaging institutional stakeholders such as organizations offering social service and healthcare providers. This component of the study explores stakeholder perspectives on service gaps, barriers to access, and potential areas for methodological and structural improvements. Specific themes include:

- Client characteristics and service needs.
- Availability and accessibility of services, including the territorial context of service use.
- Collaboration patterns among service providers.
- Institutional challenges, including funding structures, administrative hurdles, and workforce development needs.
- Innovations in service delivery, such as inter-agency collaboration, shared service spaces, telemedicine solutions.
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This presentation will summarize the key insights derived from the assessment phase, shedding light on the critical factors that influence the successful integration of health and social services for homeless populations. The findings contribute to broader discussions on policy innovation and the practical implications of transitioning towards integrated service models in the CEE region.



Alena Vachnová (VPR and DEDO Foundation, Košice) – Lead Partner, Advocate for Ending Homelessness, and Program Designer, she leads strategy and innovation at the DEDO Foundation, advocating for systemic change to end homelessness through integrated housing, social support, healthcare, and employment services in Košice and Prešov, Slovakia. She holds degrees in law and social work and a Master of Public Administration from Harvard Kennedy School.



Elena Zagorová (VPR and DEDO Foundation, Košice) – Research Partner, Graduated with a Master's degree in Business Informatics from the Technical University of Košice, specializing in data analysis. Experienced in working with diverse datasets, including medical data. She participated in the Needs assessment of people experiencing homelessness concerning integrated health and social care.

Nóra Teller, Eszter Somogyi, Noémi Vajdovich (Metropolitan Research Institute, Budapest) – Project Monitoring and Evaluation Team



Nóra Teller (PhD, Sociology) works at the Metropolitan Research Institute. She is member of the European Observatory on Homelessness and has co-edited the European Journal of Homelessness for 16 years. She has 24 years of research and consultancy experience in social inclusion and housing inclusion measures, homelessness research, and housing desegregation in the urban and rural context.



Eszter Somogyi (MA in Sociology) works at Metropolitan Research Institute, a Hungarian think-tank, has more than twenty years of experience in research and policy consultancy related to urban regeneration, housing policy and complex policy making targeting vulnerable people. She took part in several research and consultation activities targeted to the most marginalized social groups, such as homeless people and Roma communities. Her expertise also includes national and local strategy development aiming to secure affordable housing and linking housing policies with employment and education policies.



Noémi Vajdovich finished her Master's degree in Geography at the Eötvös Loránd University in 2024. She was a member of Eötvös József Collegium and also spent a Semestre in Spain with Erasmus. She won a competition with her paper about regional differences of energy poverty in 2021 in the national scientific student conference (OTDK) on the regional differences. She started her PhD studies in September 2024 at ELTE on geographical health dimensions of homelessness and she is employed at the Metropolitan Research Institute where she is involved in various research projects on regional processes, homelessness, integrated health and social care, housing exclusion and also sustainable urban markets.