

Seminar 5: (ROOM TBC) Methodology and Research Ethics

Chair: **Joe Doherty, UK**

Clíodhna Bairéad, IE: Single Homelessness in the Dublin Region: Using secondary analysis of administrative data to examine individual's pathways through homelessness.



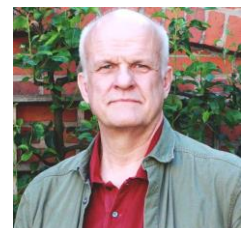
Clíodhna Bairéad is a Social Policy PhD candidate in University College Dublin, her research is partnered with Focus Ireland. Her current research uses the theory of homelessness as a form of statelessness to examine homeless service users patterns of service usage and entry, exit and re-entry into homelessness in the Dublin region.

Over the past five years, homelessness in Ireland has escalated into a national crisis. As the numbers of people experiencing homelessness grows annually, questions as to how people enter and exit homelessness have become more prevalent in national consciousness. The primary focus, thus far, throughout the crisis has been on families who experience homelessness. Since 2018 single people's experiences of homelessness has been examined in more detail using secondary analysis of administrative data. This data is collected from the Pathways Accommodation and Support System (PASS). This system, started in 2011, allows people who experience homelessness to access emergency accommodation through a centralised system. PASS also allows support services to record engagements, support plans and key working progress. Through examining this data, it is possible to examine the commonalities and differences of those who experience homelessness. This unique research project uses statistical analysis to demonstrate the pathways different groups of single people take through homelessness. Aspects of individual lives that are considered to have a possible impact on these pathways (including: age; gender; ethnicity; reason for homelessness; and previous accommodation) have been selected. Analysis of these details are examined in relation to experiences of homelessness (such as length of time in homelessness and exit type) in order to identify patterns which may affect exits from homelessness among this cohort. An original data set has been compiled from PASS data with the cooperation of the Dublin Region Homeless Executive. Initial analysis is being completed on years 2016-2018.

Marcus Knutagård, Arne Kristiansen, Carina Nilsson & Ann-Kristin Sörensen, SE: Ethical and Methodological Challenges in Action Research on Homelessness Services



Ann-Kristin Sorensen has for several years been a tenant in Helsingborg's Housing First program. She has participated in an action research-oriented project for developing service user involvement in a municipal homelessness service. Nowadays she is a social worker in a homelessness service in Helsingborg.



Arne Kristiansen, PhD, is associate professor in Social Work at Lund University. His research includes homelessness, substance abuse and service user involvement. He cooperates with several service user organizations, which he involves both in social work education and in research projects



Carina Nilsson is a social worker with a bachelor's degree in Social Work from Lund University. She has been coordinator of the Housing First program in Helsingborg and has been involved in action research projects in collaboration with Lund University.

For **Marcus Knutagard's** CV please check the plenary section.

Action research has another objective than dominating concepts in social science research – where the research aspects of the study are emphasized rather than creating change, and where objectivity, neutrality and avoidance of bias are important notions in the research process. The action research approach also means that the researchers will cooperate with various actors, such as social workers and service users. This collaboration poses ethical and methodological challenges that are not as explicitly relevant to conventional social science research. One example of an ethical challenge is the questions about confidentiality in the activities being investigated. Methodological challenges can, for example, entail that researchers, social workers and service users have different expectations and views on how the research should be conducted and how the activities should be developed. Another challenge is that, although it is often the practitioners that take the initiative and invite the researchers into action research projects, the researchers often have greater influence on the research design. The aim of this paper is to examine, analyze and reflect on how social workers and service users view their involvement in a research project to develop homelessness work in the city of Helsingborg in Sweden. A substantial conclusion is that it is of great importance to maintain a continuous dialogue between service users, social workers and researchers, not least to support the service users and the social workers in their role as peer researchers. The project was carried out in 2014 to 2017 and its purpose was to improve the social housing program in Helsingborg by implementing core principles and core elements from the Housing first philosophy.