

REGULATING BEHAVIOUR AND DAILY LIVES OF YOUNG HOMELESS WOMEN IN CRISIS ACCOMMODATION IN POLAND

MAGDALENA MOSTOWSKA & KATARZYNA DĘBSKA

UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW, POLAND



CRISIS ACCOMMODATION EMPOWERING OR DISCIPLINING?

FOUCAULT (1975), SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE (BOURDIEU & PASSERON 1990)

TOTAL INSTITUTIONS (GOFFMAN 1961):

- STAFF-INHABITANTS
- HOUSE RULES
- DAILY ROUTINE

IN HOMELESSNESS SERVICES:

CRAMER 2005, JOHNSEN ET AL. 2018, WATTS ET AL. 2018, MAHONEY 2019

CRISIS ACCOMODATION IN POLAND

	SOW (Centre for Victims of Domestic Violence)	OIK (Crisis Centre)	DSM (Single Mothers' Home)
Funding	State	Local government	1) Local government 2) Own resources, fundraising
Legal basis	Prevention of Family Violence Act	Social Assistance Act	Social Assistance Act „For Life” Act (2016)
Quantity	35	212 (not all provide accommodation)	13 (funded by local governments)
Max stay	3 months	3 months	1 year
Run by whom?	State agencies	Local governments	1) Other NGOs 2) Catholic convents
For whom?	Victims of domestic violence	Persons in crisis	Pregnant women and women with under-aged children
Referral	No	No	1) Yes 2) No

NATIONAL HOMELESS COUNT 2017

2017	Total	Men	Children	Women	% Women
Institutional	24194	19927	881	3386	14,0%
Emergency night shelter	3467	3207	21	239	6,9%
Warming-up station	1138	1043	0	95	8,3%
Homeless shelter	15077	12555	339	2183	14,5%
Single mothers' home	800	11	406	383	47,9%
Crisis centre	309	45	110	154	49,8%
Hospital and treatment	1507	1276	1	230	15,3%
Prison	1718	1617	4	97	5,6%
Sobering-up station, social emergency	178	173	0	5	2,8%
Non-institutional	9214	7389	320	1505	16,3%
Inhabitable space	2432	2154	0	278	11,4%
Vacant building and allotment garden	4076	3237	93	746	18,3%
Other	2706	1998	227	481	17,8%

ABOUT THE PROJECT

- 2016-2019
- FUNDED BY THE NATIONAL SCIENCE CENTRE
- COMPARISON OF TWO PROVINCES IN POLAND: MAZOWIECKIE AND PODKARPACKIE
- INTERVIEWS WITH EXPERTS, PRACTITIONERS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, LAWYERS, MANAGEMENT, INHABITANTS OF VARIOUS SERVICES, VISITS AND OBSERVATION
- **DOMINANT DISCOURSES, LEGISLATION, RULES, INTERVIEWS WITH STAFF AND INHABITANTS, PRACTICES, SPACE**

DAILY ROUTINE

CRISIS CENTRES

INDIVIDUAL SCHEDULE

OWN MEALS, TAKING CARE OF CHILDREN

LEGAL ADVICE, THERAPY ETC.

WITH PROFESSIONALS

SINGLE MOTHERS' HOMES

FIXED COMMON SCHEDULE

PRAYERS, COMMON MEALS

STAFF LIVING TOGETHER

„FAMILY-LIKE” RELATIONS

SPACE

CRISIS CENTRES

POSTERS, LEAFLETS ABOUT VIOLENCE

AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

SAFETY (CCTV, DOUBLE DOOR, GUARD)

COMMON MEETING ROOM

SMALL KITCHENS

THERAPY ROOMS

SINGLE MOTHERS' HOMES

CHURCH PROPERTY

POSTERS, LEAFLETS (CONDEMNING OF

ABORTION, PRO-LIFE)

CHAPEL, CATHOLIC SYMBOLS

COMMON DINING ROOM

LARGE KITCHEN

RELATIONS WITH STAFF

CRISIS CENTRES

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

NO COMMENTS ON RAISING CHILDREN

PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE,

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

ORIENTED TOWARDS FUTURE

SOCIAL CONTRACT

SINGLE MOTHERS' HOMES

JUDGEMENTAL OF INHABITANTS' SEXUAL
BEHAVIOUR, RAISING CHILDREN ETC.

INTERFERING WITH ADDICTION THERAPY,
PUTTING CHILDREN FOR ADOPTION

CONTROLLING FINANCES (COMMON ACCOUNT
FOR BENEFITS, CHILD ALLOWANCES)

CONCLUSIONS

YOUNG WOMEN AT RISK OF BEING TREATED AS DEFECTIVE

CRISIS CENTRES

NOT SOCIALIZED TO BE INDEPENDENT AND RESPONSIBLE - THE SOCIO-INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM IS TO BLAME (SYSTEM TALK)

SINGLE MOTHERS' HOMES

IMMORAL AND PROMISCUOUS, IN NEED OF MORAL CORRECTION – AN INDIVIDUAL IS TO BLAME (SIN TALK)

CONCLUSIONS

CRISIS CENTRES

INFORMAL PRACTICES OF SELECTING WOMEN
WITH MORE RESOURCES

EXPECTING EFFECTIVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY
(REVOLVING DOOR)

SINGLE MOTHERS' HOMES

MORALLY JUDGING , VICTIM-BLAMING

NOT EMPOWERING, REPRESSING AGENCY

HIGHER STANDARD, SUPPORT AND CARE

- MOTHERS' HOMES WILL GET MORE FINANCING BUT ARE OUTSIDE OF STATE CONTROL
- ACKNOWLEDGING HOMELESSNESS AS ONE OF PRIORITY PROBLEMS
- FINDING LONG-TERM HOUSING SOLUTIONS FOR WOMEN

*THIS PAPER IS WRITTEN THANKS TO RESEARCH FINANCED BY THE POLISH NATIONAL SCIENCE
CENTRE (PROJECT NO. 2015/17/B/HS6/04191).*