Seminar 15: Policy Analysis (Floor -2, Room 11)
Chair: **Nóra Teller, HU**

Valesca Lima and Rory Hearne, IE: Housing Financialisation and the Creation of Homelessness in Ireland

Dr Valesca Lima is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the DCU School of Law and Government.

Dr Rory Hearne is Assistant Professor of Social Policy in Maynooth University Department of Applied Social Studies. He is author of 'Housing Shock; The Irish Housing Crisis and How to Solve it'

There is growing interest in the impacts of financialisation on housing affordability and insecurity in the private rental sector, particularly financialisation 2.0 and the increased role of global real estate funds. This paper aims to contribute to our understanding of these impacts on housing systems and housing marginalisation by conceptually and empirically exploring the relationship between the financialisation of rental housing and homelessness in the post-crash era. We identify the processes and pathways by which this has unfolded in Ireland.

Since 2010, global real estate and equity investors entered the Irish residential property market and these institutional landlords are now Ireland's largest private landlords, largely focused in the capital, Dublin, and surrounding areas. Ireland also experienced a new homelessness crisis in this period. New presentations of families becoming homeless started to increase from 2013 onwards, following, and in parallel to, the trend of rapidly increasing rents, and the increasing involvement of real estate investment funds in the Irish private rental market. Focusing on the impact on low income tenants in the PRS, we draw on the temporal approach to consider the particular impacts and outcomes of the changing nature of the regime of financialisation on private rental housing.

Our findings point to the financialisation of the Private Rental Sector (PRS) in Ireland, and particularly the emergence of institutional landlords, playing an important direct and indirect contributory role in the structural housing factors that create homelessness, including reduced affordability, rising housing insecurity, displacement and evictions. We argue there is a need for greater attention to be paid to the evolving real estate-state-finance relationship, particularly the central role of the state, conceptualised here through pathways and processes of action and inaction, in developing and facilitating financialisation.

Nicholas Pleace, UK: Barriers to the Obvious: Understanding Uneven Progress in Developing and Delivering Integrated, Preventative and Housing-Led Homelessness Strategies

Nicholas Pleace is Director of the Centre for Housing Policy, an interdisciplinary research team within the School of Business and Society at the University of York. He has worked in homelessness research for over 25 years and been a member of the European Observatory on Homelessness for over a decade. Nicholas has a Chair in Social Policy at York and is currently the University Research Theme Champion for Justice and Equalities Research.

This paper draws on research and consultancy undertaken in Ireland, Northern Ireland and at local authority in the UK, alongside an evidence review on the degree to which integrated homelessness strategies are being adopted within the EU and OECD countries. Narratives that homelessness is 'complex' and that there is both an insufficient understanding and a shortfall in the use of 'evidenced' strategies and service models that demonstrably 'work' remain widespread. These narratives are often framed within images of homelessness as predominately an experience of lone men with complex needs living rough and in emergency shelters. Alongside this, there are frequent calls for better data to more fully 'understand' homelessness, including considerable

efforts to enhance enumeration of people sleeping rough. The disconnect between these narratives and demonstrably effective good practice exists at two levels. First, the assertions around 'complexity' and a stronger focus on 'what works' are narrowly grounded, tending to emphasise North American conceptualisations and methodologies, while side-lining European examples of successfully preventing and reducing homelessness that are both effective and, in strategic terms, really relatively simple in nature. Second, calls for improved data are often grounded in conceptualisations of homelessness as explicable and solvable primarily in terms individual pathology, neglecting the gender dynamics of homelessness and the 'hidden' nature of homelessness. In the light of the development of the European platform to combat homelessness, key lessons to overcome distorted narratives on the nature of homelessness and on the nature of effective strategy are considered.