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## Editorial

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When the European Journal of Homelessness was established in 2007, its express aim was to provide a forum for the critical analysis of policy and practice on homelessness and housing exclusion in Europe for policy makers, practitioners, researchers and academics in order to facilitate the development of a stronger evidential base for policy development and innovation. In this edition of the Journal, we deal with a number of issues that are at the heart of debates on policy and practice in Europe and future afield, in particular defining and measuring homelessness, and the effectiveness of housing first / housing led models of service provision to bring about sustainable solutions to homelessness. To foster debate on these issues, we asked a number of distinguished scholars, practitioners and advocates to critically comment on two articles that appeared in the vol.5(2) of the Journal: the article by Nicholas Pleace on the applicability of the Housing First model to Europe and the article by Kate Amore and colleagues on the robustness of the ETHOS typology of homelessness developed by Feantsa and the European Observatory on Homelessness.

These short, thoughtful and insightful contributions are intended to provoke further reflection on these key issues. For example, over the past year the ETHOS typology has been adopted as the conceptual framework for a new definition of homelessness by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and by the Canadian Homelessness Research Network, in addition to forming the conceptual basis for the New Zealand Bureau of Statistics, which prompted the critical article on ETHOS by Amore and colleagues. Learning from the experiences of others, and the transfer of ideas and models from one country to another are an important part of the policy making process, but the process of reflection undertaken in the Journal helps to ensure that such transfers are evidence based rather than simply implemented as quick fixes. This is particularly the case with Housing First models, where a temptation may exist for both policy makers and service providers, in very different welfare and housing contexts, to adopt such models uncritically, either because they are perceived to be 'best practice' or that funding of services is in part dependent on the adoption of such models. A detailed understanding of the 'varieties of Housing First' and the welfare context in which specific models are implemented are crucial to the successful transfer of robust and sustainable policies.

The three peer-reviewed articles in this edition of the journal will also have short response pieces next year, as they deal with topical issues that warrant further discussion, debate and clarification. Crane, Warnes and Coward explore the associations between the preparation for independent living that 400 homeless people received in three English cities and the outcomes of their resettlement. While the paper suggests that homeless people benefit from being in temporary accommodation before they are resettled, challenging a key principle of the Housing First model, the authors highlight that the practice across various Housing First models vary, and that their data raises new questions about what works best. The operational manual for Pathways Housing First, the original Housing First model developed in New York by Sam Tsemberis, is the subject of a detailed critical discourse analysis on the meaning of consumer choice in the second article. The authors argue that the very idea of consumer choice is linked to an advanced liberal way of governing subjects, and that clients do not make their choices totally on their own, rather they are governed to make 'right' choices as responsabilised autonomous consumers. In the third article, the view that homelessness is increasingly criminalized in Europe is challenged, and suggests that the 'punitive turn' is variable and that local circumstances may be more influential in shaping responses to homelessness than neoliberalism. It also suggests that punitive response to vagrancy and anti-begging legislation and policies are not novel, but rather have a long history.

Since the establishment of the Journal, we have reviewed homeless strategies in various member states and to-date, the Journal has reviewed strategies in Scotland, Ireland, Denmark, Finland and France. The Dutch Strategy to Combat Homelessness is reviewed in this edition, and while the outcomes in terms of preventing homelessness are very positive, some elements of the strategy, particularly the coercive strands associated with regulating rough sleepers are subject to some criticism.

The victimisation of rough sleepers is the subject of the first think piece in this edition of the Journal, where Kinsella conclusively demonstrates that while much public discourse highlights the alleged threats posed by rough sleepers, the research evidence shows that rough sleepers are more likely to be victims, rather than perpetrators of crime. Vulnerable populations are tackled in the next two 'think pieces', with Paidakaki outlining what may be learnt from natural and man-made disasters in responding to homelessness and Kiss highlighting the vulnerability of refugees to homelessness in a case study in Hungary. In the final think piece of this edition, Allen critiques the push towards quality standards in homeless services, stressing the fundamental distinction between social services which essentially accept the 'condition' of the person to whom they are providing services, and those services whose purpose it to assist a transformation of that condition. Homeless services should be transformative and the push towards quality services may potentially clash with Housing First / Housing Led initiatives.



The European Journal of Homelessness also aims to provide up-dates on research in progress on aspects of homelessness in Europe, but not yet completed or published, and to keep readers informed of new publications on homelessness in Europe and elsewhere. We hope readers find these book reviews and updates of interest.

The next edition of the European Journal of Homelessness will publish select papers from the annual Research Conference on Homelessness in Europe, which was held in the University of York in September and will focus on aspects of social housing and homelessness in Europe. We hope that you find the journal of interest and of use, whether you are a policy maker, practitioner, researcher, academic or concerned citizen.