



FEANTSA

Italy

FEANTSA Country Fiche¹

<p>Key Statistics</p>	<p>In Italy there are over 47,000 homeless people (Istat 2011).² This amounts to 0.2% of the resident population. More than 70% are rough sleepers. There were 28,323 homeless foreigners in Italy in 2011, accounting for 59.4% of the homeless population.</p> <p>Currently the Minister of Labour and Social Policy and the National Institute of Statistics (Istat), in collaboration with Caritas Italia and fio.PSD, are carrying out a follow-up survey (Istat 2011), using data from 2013. The Survey aims to provide a Census of local services for homeless people in 158 cities and to evaluate changes and trends over the last two years.</p>
<p>Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People</p>	<p>Official data from the forthcoming follow-up survey (Istat-fio.PSD) will be available in October 2014. However, there are two empirical trends from the initial examination of results, which are also reflected in the reporting activities of services for homeless people:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homelessness has increased by 20% in the last year 2. The pattern of services for homeless people is changing. As in the former survey, more than half of homeless people are male migrants. Many shelters are closing due to lack of funds or for renovation; the use of soup kitchens and health services has increased by 10%.³
<p>Change in Profile of Homeless People</p>	<p>There is no recent data showing a change in the profile of homeless people. However, since 2011, ISTAT has carried out, every year, a <i>Report on Social Cohesion</i> (2013) to describe socio-economic conditions in the Italian regions as regards the labour market, economy, social inclusion and poverty.⁴ An interesting development is the introduction of a new social indicator in the context of “Europe 2020”. It aims to evaluate the material deprivation rate and the number of people living in severely materially deprived conditions.</p> <p>Even if these data do not strictly refer to homeless people, they reveal increased vulnerability to homelessness and indicate worsening living conditions.</p> <p>Based on data of the Report on Social Cohesion (ISTAT 2013), the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion⁵ in Italy has gone from 24.7% of total population in 2009 to 29.2% in 2012.</p> <p>Unemployment represents a further element of the material deprivation index.⁶ The number of poor workers using social services has increased. In 2012, 10.2% of people lived in</p>

¹ Last updated January 2014

² Istat (2012) Anno 2011 Le Persone Senza Dimora, available at <http://www.istat.it/it/archivio/72163>

³ Follow up Istat and Survey by territorial members of fio.PSD.

⁴ Istat, 2013, Fourth Report on Social Cohesion.

⁵ At risk-of-poverty are persons with an average disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60% of the average national median disposable income (after social transfers).

⁶ Material deprivation covers indicators relating to economic strain and durables.

	<p>households with very low work intensity (+1.5% from 2009). Lastly, people living with severe material deprivation people (Eurostat index⁷) make up 24.9% of the total population. Many middle class people are now experiencing poverty and have made contact with the social services for the first time.</p> <p>Housing problems are on the increase. The Report on Social Cohesion reveals that in 2012 there were 32,123 eviction measures for rent arrears, 120,903 evictions requested and 27,695 evictions carried out (for the most part in Lombardia, Emilia Romagna, Toscana and Lazio).</p> <p>This means that a preventative approach to housing policy would be necessary to avoid a dramatic increase in homelessness.</p> <p>Empirical data from local service providers suggest an increasing number of low-income people (not homeless people) using soup kitchens as a kind of "social benefit".</p>
<p>National Strategy</p>	<p>Today there is no a homogeneous, national homelessness strategy. The Central government has made new efforts to provide a strategy for tackling homelessness and poverty, such as to promote a housing policy initiative.</p> <p>The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is currently working on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Definition of Guidelines for tackling homelessness at local level.</i> They aim to define a comprehensive strategy at local level (definition of "homeless people" following ETHOS typology; overview of institutional framework and main policy responses adopted until now in Italy; exchange on best practices. This is the first political and technical attempt at national level to define criteria and quality standards for service provision to homeless people holistically. fio.PSD is the technical coordinator of this process under a formal agreement with the Minister. The steering group members are policy makers at national, regional and city level. • <i>A Minimum income programme</i> called "SIA" (Support for active inclusion") is being discussed by the central government; it would strengthen the experimental "social card". This measure is not intended to support rough sleepers but very low income people (also covered by ETHOS categories) • <i>Follow up of homelessness survey</i> (Istat-Minister-Caritas-fio.PSD) with the promise to renew it every two years. This represents a new interest in the phenomenon and the will to provide a data-based policy in coherence with the distribution and characteristics of homelessness in the different Italian contexts • The national government has signed voluntary commitments within the FEAD (<i>Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived</i>) for the non-food programme. fio.PSD is taking part in the partnership, dealing with the Operational Programme on "Social inclusion". It is assumed that fio.PSD will formally take the lead in this area linked to local-level Housing First projects. <p>The Ministry of Territorial Cohesion has done the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the "<i>Partnership Agreement for the use of Structural Funds 2014-2020</i>" sent to the European Commission on the 9th December 2013, there is a first and clear declaration of the will to promote integrated homelessness policies: using the ERDF for housing; reusing of real estate and conventions with local bodies to support

⁷ Severely materially deprived persons experience living conditions that are severely constrained by a lack of resources. they experience at least 4 out of the 9 following deprivations: cannot afford to i) pay rent or utility bills, ii) keep the home adequately warm, iii) face unexpected expenses, iv) eat meat, fish or a protein equivalent every second day, v) a week's holiday away from home, vi) a car, vii) a washing machine, viii) a colour TV, or ix) a telephone. People living in households with very low work intensity are those aged 0-59 living in households where the adults (aged 18-59) worked less than 20% of their total work potential during the past year.

	<p>innovative housing approaches such as housing-led policies; using the ESF to promote active social inclusion for poor and homeless people.</p> <p>The Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport (Department of Housing policy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is dealing with new <i>Guidelines for improving the quality of building and easy access to the public (social) housing stock</i> including: eviction prevention, social support and community-based programmes.
<p>Targeted Prevention</p>	<p>Both of the Guideline processes by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Infrastructure focus on prevention too. This is a very new approach at national level in Italy.</p> <p>Innovative Activities useful in terms of prevention</p> <p>Currently there are many activities, projects and researches at the different levels (this list contains only “a few”):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Istat <i>Social Cohesion Report</i> contains a description of socio-economic conditions in Italy. It has been updated every year since 2011 and it is possible to compare it with European level (EU 25) data on the labour market, social inclusion, income and material deprivation, social exclusion. The <i>Alliance Against Poverty in Italy</i> is a national project about the introduction of a <i>Minimum Income Programme for Social Inclusion</i> called REIS. It is now a work in progress coordinated by ACLI with a large partnership including major Trades Unions, NGOs and fio.PSD. Local initiatives and workshops on homelessness and housing such as: ‘<i>Welforum</i>’ of <i>Metropolitan Areas</i> (data available www.irsonline.it)⁸ <p>Other interesting activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Beauty always wins</i> is the innovative project carried out by fio.PSD in collaboration with the University of Turin (Department of Anthropology), Turin Polytechnic (Department of Architecture) and “Il Samaritano”, NGO in Verona, which aims to renovate a shelter and a day-centre for homeless people, allowing space for relationships, training workshops, library, games room. The idea behind this project is that a ‘beautiful’ atmosphere helps comfort and support people with problems on the pathway towards well-being and autonomy. <i>Post-acute care for homeless people</i> is an experimental project carried out by fio.PSD, Medici senza frontiere (Doctors without Borders NGO), <i>Progetto Arca</i> Foundation, the City of Milan and Milan Health Unit. The aim is to guarantee post-discharge hospital care for homeless people that should continue the care “at home”. <p>For details, visit the fio.PSD website www.fiopsd.org (News or Events section)</p>
<p>Housing-Led Approaches</p>	<p>There is a variety of experiences of the housing-led approach in Italian cities. Over the last few years, more than 30 cities (such as Bologna, Turin, Bergamo, Rimini and Lucca) have started to invest in Housing-led (and Housing First) projects and in active social inclusion projects.</p> <p>Based on the good results of the “Casas Primeiro” (Homelessness Programme in Lisbon, supervised by Professor José Ornelas) and “Pathways to housing” (Programme to provide Housing First in New York founded by Dr Sam Tsemberis), fio.PSD is carrying out a project to building an <i>Italian Housing First Programme</i> (the first event took place in Turin, 28th February-</p>

⁸ <http://www.irsonline.it/materiali-60-6>

	<p>1st March 2014)</p> <p>This programme aims to define criteria and a methodological approach for HF Italy and involve all those who are interested in cooperating in this innovative project.</p> <p>Furthermore, fio.PSD is carrying out tutoring and support work at local level to define Guidelines for tackling homelessness. With these activities, fio.PSD has provided support to many cities with Housing First projects. For example, in April 2013, an agreement was signed between City of Rimini and City of Lucca about an exchange of best practices on Housing First solutions. The City of Rimini has decided to shift the budget on homelessness intervention from a “Winter emergency” project to a Housing First project.</p> <p>In December 2013, a new Caritas network in the Sicily Region (supported by fio.PSD) obtained funding of 500,000 euros from the National Episcopal Conference to finance local Housing First projects.</p>	
<p>Quality of Homeless Services</p>	<p>There are no quality standards or guidelines yet for homeless service provision. They are expected in June 2014 (see above).</p> <p>In many different cities, best practices exist at the level of individual services or projects.</p>	
<p>Remarks on Research</p>	<p>Over the last two years, homelessness has received more attention than in the past from political institutions and press. This may be because of the fact that the crisis has brought attention to poverty and absolute poverty.</p> <p>fio.PSD has obtained, in cooperation with the University of Calabria, the inclusion in the follow-up of the Istat Research of a <i>qualitative focus</i> on 200 "outreach units". Conducting interviews with social operators aims: to better define the characteristics of “outreach units” (there is a variety of experiences in different cities); and to know the numbers of hidden homeless people who do not use services and remain severely isolated.</p> <p>One outcome of this process is a (still informal) definition of "outreach units" in Italy shared by Universities, homelessness professionals and data collection professionals (ISTAT).</p>	
<p>Remarks on Budget Evolution</p>	<p>Many local NGOs are under pressure because of severe reductions in public (local/regional) funding as well as reduced access to charitable resources due to growing competition for this funding source.</p>	
<p>Remarks on Key Policy Developments</p>	<p>Positive</p> <p>The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is increasingly open to partnership on homelessness, notably with fio.PSD (the national umbrella of homeless service providers).</p> <p>Homelessness has become more of a priority issue because of the first national survey in October 2012 (see above). Housing policy has also received more attention due to the focus on homelessness.</p>	<p>Negative</p> <p>Based on survey data (Istat 2011) there is a strong focus on rough sleepers rather than on the full spectrum of homelessness and housing exclusion. This makes it difficult for policymakers to understand the link between prevention, treatment and resettlement.</p> <p>There is increasing effort on homelessness but still a lack of resources (human and financial) to translate existing knowledge into concrete policy frameworks.</p>