

## Overview of Transnational Statistical Initiatives on Homelessness and Poverty



## Table of contents

### Summary

#### European Union

- 1 European Commission
  - 1.1 Study on measurement of homelessness at EU level (2007)
  - 1.2 Mphasis 2008-2009
  - 1.3 Eurobarometer surveys
  - 1.4 European Observatory on the Social Situation and Demography
  - 1.5 European project on youth homelessness paths
  - 1.6 Study on measurement of extreme poverty at EU level (2009)
- 2 Eurostat
  - 2.1 European Community Household Panel (ECHP)
  - 2.2 EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC)
  - 2.3 Taskforce on homelessness 2001-2004
  - 2.4 Urban audit – A study on the quality of life in European Cities
  - 2.5. EU regulation on population and housing census
- 3 Indicators Sub-Group (ISG)
  - 3.1 EU social inclusion indicators
  - 3.2 Deprivation and housing
  - 3.3 Homelessness
- 4 European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
- 5 EU Housing Ministers Meeting – Housing statistics in the European Union
- 6 European Typology of Homelessness and housing exclusion (ETHOS)

#### United Nations

- 1 UN Statistics Division
  - 1.1 World Population and Housing census programme
  - 1.2 Expert groups
  - 1.3 City groups on social and poverty statistics
- 2 UN-Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
  - 2.1 Population and Housing censuses in Europe
  - 2.2 Committee on Housing and Land Management
- 3 UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
  - 3.1 Global Urban Observatory – a monitoring tool
  - 3.2 Global Campaign for Secure Tenure
  - 3.3 UN Housing Rights Programme (UNHRP)
- 4 Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
  - 4.1 Monitoring Implementation of Human Rights Treaties
  - 4.2 Human rights indicators

#### Other international sources

- 1 Council of Europe
  - 1.1 Social cohesion indicators
  - 1.2 European Social Charter: Reporting on application of housing rights
- 2 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
  - 2.1 "Society at a glance": OECD social indicators publication
  - 2.2 OECD social, employment and migration working papers
  - 2.3 OECD Economic surveys
- 3 European System of Social Indicators (ESUI)

Annex I: ETHOS – European Typology of Homelessness and housing exclusion

Annex II: Social and housing indicators

## SUMMARY

The collection of data in the field of poverty is a very important element of policy-making. It contributes to a better understanding of phenomena of poverty, as well as the profiles of people experiencing poverty; and it provides the right basis for implementing comprehensive social policy measures with the aim of combating poverty. The development of indicators is equally important in order to monitor the effect of policy measures against poverty and social exclusion.

There are many interesting transnational initiatives in the field of data collection. FEANTSA continues to follow them, namely the initiatives that could contribute to improving the collection of data on homelessness and to the creation of robust indicators to monitor the impact of homeless policies.

This paper looks at transnational statistical initiatives (past and present), and is divided into three main parts:

**Part 1 “European Union”** relates to the different EU bodies and networks active in the collection of data on poverty (including homelessness) in Europe. DGEMPL of the European Commission is currently the leader on statistical initiatives on homelessness at EU level, with several interesting actions taken over the last few years (research, transnational projects, surveys). This section also looks at the initiatives of Eurostat (ECHP, EU-SILC, the EU Urban audit), the work of the Indicators Sub-Group of the Social Protection committee (EU social inclusion indicators, including indicators on housing and material deprivation), the surveys of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working conditions, the data collected by the EU housing ministers, and initiatives taken within FEANTSA (such as the ETHOS typology).

**Part 2 “United Nations”** takes a closer look at the work of UN agencies like the UN Statistics Division, UNECE, UN-Habitat and the country-reporting to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

**Part 3 “Other international sources”** provides a brief look at the initiatives from the Council of Europe (social cohesion indicators, and reporting on housing rights), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the European System of Social Indicators.

The aim of this paper is to provide FEANTSA members with an overview of past and current initiatives undertaken at European and international levels. FEANTSA is already involved in developing statistics on homelessness in cooperation with some of these bodies, and will look into the possibility of contributing to other initiatives.

## EUROPEAN UNION

In June 1997, Article 285 was inserted in the Amsterdam Treaty (Article 338 in the pending 2008 Lisbon Treaty) providing Community statistics with a constitutional basis for the first time. "1. ... the Council, ... shall adopt measures for the production of statistics where necessary for the performance of the activities of the Community. The production of Community Statistics shall conform to impartiality, reliability, objectivity, scientific independence, cost-effectiveness and statistical confidentiality; it shall not entail excessive burdens on economic operators." Article 285 was a key step for EU statistics. More and more statistics have to be collected at Community level because of the development of the Union.

At the same time, the Treaty of Amsterdam article 136 states that "the Community and the Member States (...) shall have as their objectives the promotion of employment, improving living and working conditions so as to make possible their harmonisation between management and labour, the development of human resources with a view to lasting high employment and the combating of exclusion".

Since the fight against social exclusion and poverty has become part of the activities of the Community, it is important that the EU develops statistics in this field as well as indicators to monitor the effect of EU policy measures. This first part on the **European Union** relates to the different EU bodies and networks active in the collection of data on poverty (including homelessness) in Europe. DGEMPL of the European Commission is currently the leader on statistical initiatives on homelessness at EU level, with several interesting actions taken over the last few years (research, transnational projects, surveys). This section also looks at the initiatives of Eurostat (ECHP, EU-SILC, the Taskforce on Homelessness and the EU Urban audit), the work of the Indicators Sub-Group of the Social Protection committee (common EU indicators on poverty, including indicators on housing and material deprivation), the surveys of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working conditions, the data collected by the EU housing ministers, and initiatives taken within FEANTSA (such as the ETHOS typology).

### 1. EUROPEAN COMMISSION @

In the framework of the EU strategy on social protection and social inclusion (launched in 2000), the European Commission is seeking to facilitate learning between EU countries on the development of policies to tackle poverty (including homelessness), and on the development of common definitions, statistical methods to collect data to monitor impact and progress national of policies. In this framework, the European Commission has taken a number of initiatives to improve measurement and monitoring of homelessness in Europe.

#### 1.1 Study on measurement of homelessness at EU level

The INSEE report on homelessness commissioned by Eurostat in 2001 (see below) can be seen as a first step towards making an important contribution to the progress of efforts to gauge the scale and extent of homelessness and housing deprivation in a European context.

The European Commission took up the recommendations of the INSEE report and funded a 1-year study (2006-2007) in order to make some concrete steps towards statistical capacity building for the purpose of measuring the extent and nature of housing deprivation and homelessness in the EU Member States, possibly in a cross-country comparative perspective.

This EU study on measuring homelessness makes recommendations of a methodological nature and identifies methodologies and practices for the development of the information basis required for the measurement of housing deprivation and homelessness.

Summary of main tasks of the study:

1. Develop a procedure to establish a comprehensive harmonised classification/nomenclature for housing situations (including homelessness);
2. Develop a procedure to establish a classification /nomenclature of organisations/bodies providing services to homeless people;
3. Propose appropriate methodologies for national authorities to create and maintain a directory of such organisations;
4. Propose a limited set of standard register variables for use by such organisations;
5. Propose methodologies for national authorities to undertake collection of aggregate data from these registers;
6. Propose methodologies to undertake sample surveys of users of services;
7. Reflect on type and use of statistics and indicators that could be drawn from such data;
- 8 Present draft report to the Indicators Sub-Group.

The results and recommendations of the European Commission study on measuring homelessness were presented at a seminar in Brussels on 7 February 2007 involving 80 participants from relevant backgrounds (statistics officers, policy-makers, homeless service providers, etc). The key recommendations of the study were then presented to the Indicators Sub-Group in 2007. FEANTSA will closely monitor the follow-up and encourage policy-makers to take up the recommendations formulated. The final version of the study (summary and full study) is available on the [European Commission website](#).

## **1.2. MPHASIS 2008-2009 – Mutual Progress on Homelessness through Advancing and Strengthening Information Systems (@)**

After participating in the 2007 Study on measurement of homelessness as member of the steering committee, FEANTSA examined ways of using this study and disseminating the results at national level. FEANTSA contributed to the preparation of a proposal for a transnational project on homelessness measurement called MPHASIS – Mutual Progress on Homelessness through Advancing and Strengthening Information Systems. This project was approved by the European Commission end of 2007 and was launched on 14 March 2008 in Budapest.

This project will be useful to test the 2007 EU study recommendations on developing methodologies for homelessness data collection at national level. This is a two-year mutual learning project on developing homelessness information systems, coordinated by the University of Dundee, and involving 20 countries. Homelessness strategies are currently being developed in most EU member states, and discussions on homelessness measurement are an integral part of this process. Therefore Mphasis will serve to facilitate discussions by providing a European perspective and information on the homelessness measurement methods used in different EU countries.

Mphasis is divided into two strands. The first strand is the Capacity-Building strand, which focused on mutual learning on homelessness measurement and has been implemented through 20 national [Mphasis meetings](#) organised in all the countries involved in the project. National position papers are available for all 20 participation countries – these position papers contain all the latest information on data collection in the respective countries. The second strand is the Research strand, which will examine different measurement methods in depth, namely: 1. Transferability of Good Practice in relation to Client Record systems 2. Implementation of Data Extract Modules and Protocols 3. Population register data 4. Transferability of Good Practice in relation to Service Provider Databases

The final conference of Mphasis (bringing together all project partners and other stakeholders to present the outcomes of the meetings and research) will take place on Thursday 17 September in Paris.

### 1.3 Eurobarometer (@)

Since 1973, the European Commission has been measuring public opinion through Eurobarometer surveys to inform itself about the views of European Union citizens and to share the obtained information with the general public. These surveys and studies address major topics concerning European citizenship: enlargement, social situation, health, culture, information technology, environment, the Euro, defence, etc.

#### *Perception of poverty and social exclusion in Europe - 1994*

A Eurobarometer on poverty was carried out in 1994 on *Perception of poverty and social exclusion in Europe*.

#### *How Europeans see themselves - 2000*

In one of the Eurobarometer surveys (*How Europeans see themselves - 2000*), questions were asked about EU policies at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The section on EU actions shows that a large majority of the Europeans believes that fighting poverty and social exclusion should be part of priority actions for the EU (4<sup>th</sup> priority after fight against unemployment, crime, and peace and security). Poverty is one of the issues (with environment, unemployment and crime) which most concerns Europeans. However, another section shows that 61% of Europeans think that there will be more people who are poor and socially excluded in the 21st century.

#### *Social Precarity and Social Integration- 2002*

A Eurobarometer survey commissioned by the European Commission (*Social Precarity and Social Integration- 2002*), charts trends in key factors that affect risks of social exclusion such as unemployment, lack of social support and low quality of jobs. The first two chapters focus particularly on issues relating to precarity in terms of living conditions, while the third and fourth are concerned with sources of precarity in people's work lives. The fifth and sixth chapters examine the implications of social precarity in both of these spheres for people's personal integration and their attitudes to society. The final chapter considers the implications of precarity for wider attitudes to society, to democracy and to welfare state provision. This is an interesting study of subjective deprivation.

#### *Perceptions of Poverty and Material deprivation - 2007*

The European Commission has published a [Special Eurobarometer survey](#) on perceptions of poverty (including questions on perceptions of homelessness). The field work took place in February and March 2007. The questionnaire includes a number of questions on perceptions of poor housing, and also some questions on perceptions of homelessness (causes, etc). The results of the survey are now available and provides interesting data on subjective deprivation.

#### *Family situations and needs – 2008/2009*

A Eurobarometer survey on family situations and needs was carried out in the framework of the 2008 work programme of PROGRESS (European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity).

### 1.4. European Observatory on the Social Situation and Demography (@)

The European Observatory on the Social Situation and Demography consists of four multi-disciplinary networks of independent experts established for DGEMPL of the European Commission in 2005. Its aim is to analyse social and demographic trends and to assist the Commission in its duty to report on the social situation. The Observatory produces an overview of the social and demographic situation as well as research notes and shorter policy briefs on specific issues of high policy relevance. The main contribution of the observatory are the [monitoring reports](#) (the 2007 monitoring reports and 2007 papers are now available). The reports focusing on "social inclusion and income distribution" and "health status and living conditions" include information and references to homelessness. In 2009, the Observatory is focusing on housing and homelessness. The report should be available by September 2009.

### **1.5 European project on youth homelessness paths (@)**

On 1 May 2008, the project "Combating social exclusion among young homeless populations (CSEYHP) was launched. This is a comparative investigation of homeless paths among local white, local ethnic group and migrant young men and women and appropriate reinsertion methods". This three-year research project is funded by the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Union. The four project partners are the London Metropolitan University, in London, United Kingdom; Centro de Investigação e Estudos de Sociologia (CIES-ISCTE), in Lisbon, Portugal; Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Civil Society Studies, in Prague, Czech Republic; and MOVISIE, Netherlands Centre for social development, in Utrecht, the Netherlands. MOVISIE will be the project coordinator.

The objectives of the project are fourfold:

1. to understand the life trajectories of different homeless youth populations in different national contexts
2. to develop the concepts of risk and social exclusion in relation to the experience of young homeless people and to the reinsertion process
3. to test how different methods of working contribute to the reinsertion process for young people
4. to investigate the roles of and relationships between the young person, trusted adults, lead professionals, peer mentors and family members in the delivery of these programmes across all four countries.

National reports on the Czech republic, Portugal, the UK and the Netherlands are already available online, and contain some quantitative data on youth homelessness.

### **1.6 Study on measurement of extreme poverty at EU level (2009)**

The European Commission has decided to commission a study on measurement of extreme poverty at EU level. The tender refers to the work of the Indicators Sub-Group (ISG) on developing common social inclusion indicators to measure progress in tackling poverty in Europe. It refers to the work of Eurostat and the ISG on quantifying homelessness. However, according to the European Commission, "currently available EU data sources are not well suited to capture the most severe forms of poverty, including the situation of groups, such as the Roma or people living in institutions that are most excluded from the society....In order to supplement the work carried out by Member States in the context of the ISG, the Commission is now exploring ways to reflect better the most extreme forms of poverty as they persist across the EU."

This study will be launched in September this year at a seminar in Brussels on 22 September. The study will be led by Professor Jonathan Bradshaw, University of York. The purpose of the study is to investigate and to discuss the feasibility of meaningful and agreeable concepts, definitions and operationalisations measuring of extreme poverty at EU level. There is some overlap with the work on homelessness measurement, so FEANTSA will be sure to discuss this with Prof Bradshaw in September.

## 2. EUROSTAT - the Statistical Office of the European Communities @

Eurostat is situated in Luxembourg. Its task is to provide the European Union with statistics at European level that enable comparisons between countries and regions. Eurostat was established in 1953 to meet the requirements of the European Coal and Steel Community. Over the years its task has broadened and when the European Community was founded in 1958 it became a Directorate-General (DG) of the European Commission. Eurostat's key role is to supply statistics to other DGs and supply the Commission and other European Institutions with data so they can define, implement and analyse Community policies.

Eurostat does not collect data. This is done in Member States by their statistical authorities. The latter send national data to Eurostat. Eurostat's role is to gather the data and ensure they are comparable, using harmonized methodologies. Actually Eurostat is the only provider of statistics at European level and the data it issues are harmonized as much as possible. Eurostat works on 9 different levels: general and regional statistics; economy and finance, **population and social conditions**; industry, trade and services; agriculture and fisheries; external trade; transport; environment and energy; science and technology. It also has a great number of working groups working on several topics: particularly interesting for FEANTSA is the working group on income, poverty and social exclusion.

Within the structure of Eurostat, the European Advisory Committee on Statistical Information in the Economic and Social Spheres" (CEIES) was set up by Council Decision 91/116/EEC of 25 February 1991. The task of the CEIES is described in Article 1 of the Council Decision: "...to assist the Council and the Commission in the coordination of the objectives of the Community's statistical information policy, taking into account user requirements and the costs borne by the information producers." In practical terms, this means that CEIES gives its opinion on the relevance of the Community statistical programme, on the way in which it is monitored and on the associated costs incurred by the Community, the National Statistical Institutes and the providers.

The actual work of CEIES is done by sub-committees. Four sub-committees were created in 2001. One of them covers social statistics. These opinions are distributed widely amongst the other EU and national institutions such as the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Member States, and are of great interest. In general CEIES opinions and recommendations are fully accepted and strongly influence decisions. See for example 2004 CEIES seminar report on "Social protection statistics" and the most recent 2007 seminar report on "Perspectives of improving economic welfare measurement in a changing Europe" in the CEIES [library](#). However, no CEIES seminars have focused on homelessness until now.

This section below provides an overview of the main initiatives undertaken by Eurostat, or existing data sources managed by Eurostat, which are relevant for data collection on homelessness in Europe.

### 2.1. European Community Household Panel (ECHP)

The European Community Household Panel (ECHP) was a longitudinal survey conducted annually between 1994 and 2001 by Eurostat in close collaboration with European national statistics institutes. The survey was based on a standardised questionnaire administered to 60500 households from nationally representative samples (around 130 000 individuals aged 16 years or more). Since then, the ECHP has played a central role in the development of comparable socio-economic statistics across member states on income including social transfers, labour, poverty and social exclusion, housing, health and medical care, family and household types, as well as various other social indicators concerning living conditions of private households and persons. Relevant ECHP data on income, social exclusion, poverty, and housing is available in the domain '[Living Conditions and welfare](#)' of the Eurostat website.

The panel design of the ECHP allows the same households and persons to be monitored over several consecutive years: in other words, it allows the study of social dynamics at a micro level. Beyond its multi-dimensional coverage, one peculiarity of ECHP is that it was conceived to allow for better cross-country comparability through identical survey-design and implementation procedures, as well as centralised support from Eurostat.

#### *Transition from ECHP to EU-SILC*

ECHP was traditionally the primary source of data used by Eurostat for the calculation of many indicators in the field of Income, Poverty & Social Exclusion. However the political scene changed, notably with the introduction of an open method of coordination in the fields of social inclusion and pensions reform. Other important changes include enlargement of the EU from 15 to 27 member states (and demands for coverage of other neighbouring countries), and the publication by the United Nations expert group on household income statistics of a detailed report and recommendations.

In recognition of these changes, the ECHP was progressively replaced with data collection under the EU-SILC regulations (no.1177/2003 Community Statistics on Income and Living Conditions). Wave 8 of ECHP data, collected in 2001 (income reference period 2000), was the last wave, for which results became available in December 2003. ECHP micro data (1994-2001) will still remain available for researchers, but it is not free and not available on the web. In some cases, ECHP data are still used when there are no other sources available but there is a strong tendency to replace it with more updated sources, and consequently ECHP is disappearing rapidly as a data source for indicators. See more in the Eurostat working paper: "[The continuity of indicators during the transition between ECHP and EU-SILC](#)."

## **2.2. EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions : EU-SILC (@)**

The European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) is an instrument aiming to collect timely and comparable cross-sectional and longitudinal multidimensional microdata on income, poverty, social exclusion and living conditions. This instrument is anchored in the European Statistical System (ESS). See details in the [EU-SILC regulations](#).

The EU-SILC was launched in 2004 in 13 Member States (BE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, IE, IT, LU, AT, PT, FI and SE) and in NO and IS. The first release of the cross-sectional data mainly refers to income reference year 2003 with the fieldwork carried out in 2004. The EU-SILC reached its full-scale extension with the 25 Member States plus NO, IS in 2005. It will later be completed by TR, RO, BG and CH.

The aim of EU-SILC is to establish a common framework for the systematic production of Community statistics on Income and Living conditions. EU-SILC is to become the reference source of comparative statistics on income distribution and social exclusion at the European Union level. The data of the EU-SILC project are to be used in the new streamlined open method of coordination in the areas of social inclusion, pensions and health. EU-SILC therefore aims to provide two types of data:

- Cross-sectional data pertaining to a given time or a certain time period with variables on income, poverty, social exclusion and other living conditions
- Longitudinal data pertaining to individual-level changes over time, observed periodically over, typically, a four year period.

Social exclusion and housing conditions information is collected at household level while labour, education and health information is obtained for persons aged 16 and over. The core of the instrument, income at very detailed component level, is mainly collected at personal level but a few components are included in the household part of SILC.

The primary data of EU-SILC includes housing-related information (such as information on arrears, type of housing, amenities in the dwelling, housing costs). These data are collected every year - see [Eurostat database](#) for all EU-SILC data currently available, namely under "Population and social conditions", sub-domain "Living conditions and welfare" where information can be found under "Income and living conditions", and under "Social protection" (social protection expenditure for the housing function).

On top of the primary areas, different [specialised modules](#) are being developed each year and incorporated in the main EU-SILC survey in order to collect information on areas which are not fully/adequately covered by EU-SILC: 2005 Intergenerational transmission of poverty; 2006 Social participation; 2007 Housing conditions; 2008 Over indebtedness and financial exclusion; 2009 Material Deprivation; 2010 Intra-household sharing of resources; 2011 Intergenerational transmission of disadvantage.

The Housing conditions module (2007) focused on three main areas: Housing adequacy/quality, Housing affordability, and Local environment. It contains nothing on homelessness, but does contain a variable on reasons for "change of dwelling" which may yield interesting results. The National Statistics Institutes prepared the 2007 module and incorporated it in their regular EU-SILC survey questionnaire.

The Material deprivation module (2009) was discussed by ISG members who participated in a Material deprivation taskforce in 2007 led by Eurostat (involving statisticians, ISG members and academic experts). The module was prepared on the basis of an in-depth analysis of the existing material deprivation EU-SILC results, the results of the Eurobarometer consensus survey on perceptions of poverty, and the expertise of academics. Some data on material deprivation is already available in the Eurostat database

### **2.3. The Taskforce on Homelessness 2001-2004**

In December 2001, Eurostat set up a Task Force (Expert group) to develop common methodologies to improve understanding of homelessness. This Task Force consisted of experts from national statistical agencies within the EU (France, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, Finland, representatives from Eurostat and the Commission. FEANTSA was also member of this Task Force.

In October 2001, the Task Force contracted INSEE (the French national statistical office) to carry out a feasibility study concerning available data on homelessness in the EU. INSEE then gathered the information/feedback from Task Force members, and prepared a draft evaluation report for the last meeting of the Task Force in March 2004. This report ([EN](#)) was published in January 2005 and provides an analysis of how homelessness is defined in the Member States, how food aid and accommodation services for homeless people are organized and the methods used in statistics production.

The report highlights the various obstacles to a pan-European comparison, discusses the definition(s) of homelessness and housing deprivation and reviews systems for data collection. It concludes with a series of concrete recommendations. On the basis of the results of the INSEE study, Eurostat formulated policy recommendations for the Indicators Sub-Group. In 2005, DG Employment of the European Commission<sup>1</sup> launched a call for tenders for a study on measurement of homelessness in the EU (see section 1.1 above). FEANTSA was member of the steering group for the study.

---

<sup>1</sup> N.B. All initiatives on homeless statistics and indicators were handed over from Eurostat to DG Employment and Social Affairs.

## 2.4 Urban Audit - A study on the quality of life in European cities (@)

The Urban Audit was created to meet the growing demand for an assessment of the quality of life in European cities. The policy context for the Urban Audit was provided by the Commission Communication 'Towards an urban agenda in the European Union' (1997), the subsequent discussions, and the publication of the 'Sustainable Urban Development: an EU framework for action' (1998) which have identified the need for more information about towns and cities in the EU. The Urban Audit is also part of the process of improving Urban Statistics in the EU.

Following a pilot project for the collection of comparable statistics and indicators for European cities the first full-scale European Urban Audit took place in 2003, for the then 15 countries of the European Union. In 2004 the project was extended to the 10 new Member States plus Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey. Under Eurostat coordination, the work of the Urban Audit involves all national statistical offices as well as some of the cities themselves. The second full-scale Urban Audit took place between 2006 and 2007, and involved 321 European cities in the 27 countries of the European Union, along with 36 additional cities in Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. Data collection currently takes place every three years, but an annual data collection is being planned for a smaller number of targeted variables.

### *Methodology*

This work has been carried out by Eurostat in close cooperation with DG Regio. The National Statistical Institutes (NSI) of all Member States have collected data in their cities and sent them to Eurostat which coordinate, gather and publish them in cooperation with DG Regio. The [Urban Audit Methodological Handbook](#) provides detailed information on these aspects, as well as on the methodologies and definitions, including a definition of homelessness.

The quality of life [indicators](#) of the Urban Audit cover 5 fields: demography, social aspects, economic aspects, education and training, and environment. Urban Audit indicators are generated at three different levels: wide territorial unit or conurbation level, city level and sub-city level. Under the **housing** domain, different variables are used: type of housing, type of tenure, **homelessness**, housing costs and the condition of housing stock. Unfortunately, very few cities provided information about the different variables under housing. Over the years, some domains of the Urban audit have been reviewed, extended and improved.

### *Particularly relevant for FEANTSA: Homelessness in the Urban Audit*

The Urban audit currently collects information on the number of homeless people in order to create an indicator: number of homeless people/total resident population. Until now, there have been many gaps in data on the number of homeless people. FEANTSA is trying to work with the National Urban Audit Coordinators (NUACs) - one from each country who gather the information on the 300 variables of the Urban audit – to provide data or data sources on homelessness in the cities of the Urban Audit. Data is collected on people who are roofless and people who are houseless, as well as other relevant housing-related data.

Code	Variable	spatial unit	New	LCA
SA1027V	Number of roofless persons	C, N		
SA1029V	Number of people in accommodation for the homeless	C, N		
SA1031V	Number of people in Women's Shelter	C, N		
SA1030V	Number of people in accommodation for immigrants	C, N		
SA1049V	Average annual rent for housing per m2	C, L, N		
SA1046V	Number of overcrowded households (>1 persons in 1 room)	C, L, N		
SA1048V	Number of dwellings that is authorised	C, L, N		

Data from the 2006-2007 audit is now available [online](#), including some city data on homelessness. However, sources of the data are not clear, there are still many gaps in the data, and the figures quoted do not always correspond to the figures available in the FEANTSA membership. Although the reliability of the data can be questioned in some countries, the Urban audit figures still provide an initial European overview of city statistics on homelessness.

## 2.6 EU regulation on population and housing census

In July 2008, the European Union adopted a [Regulation](#) on population and housing censuses. The last population and housing census in the EU was conducted for 2001. It was not based on European legislation, but instead on a "Gentlemen's agreement", which resulted in poor quality and a wide variation of data. The current proposal establishes common rules for a decennial collection of data, the first set of which should be published from 2011. Member States will work together with Eurostat to collect the data.

Among the core topics to be covered in the population and housing census is **housing arrangements** which includes four categories:

- people living in conventional dwellings,
- people living in non-conventional dwellings,
- people living in institutions,
- people who have no usual place of residence (e.g., homeless people).

See [CES Recommendations](#) pp.136-137.

All statistics institutes will have to collect data on homelessness in the 2011 census. Eurostat is co-organising a workshop with the UNECE in Geneva on 28-30 October 2009. One of the issues discussed at this meeting will be the enumeration of homeless people in the 2011 census, namely under the agenda item "Compliance with CES Recommendations for the 2010 censuses and enumeration of homeless people". See more [below](#) in the UNECE section.

## 3. INDICATORS SUB-GROUP (ISG) @

As part of the Lisbon strategy, the European Council in Nice 2000 defined appropriate objectives in the fight against poverty and social exclusion, and invited Member States and the Commission to develop some common indicators to foster better EU coordination and monitoring of national progress on tackling poverty. The ISG – consisting of representatives of the governments of the EU Member States with specific expertise in the area of social inclusion indicators – was commissioned by the Social Protection Committee and the European Commission to present a set of social inclusion indicators. A first set of commonly agreed and defined indicators on social inclusion was presented by the ISG to the Social Protection Committee, which served as a basis for the list of indicators adopted by the Laeken Council in December 2001.

Unfortunately the ISG could only agree on 18 European indicators mainly related to income and employment. Only one indicator referred to housing – i.e. Low-income rate transfers with breakdown by tenure status. The ISG waited for the results of the Task Force on Homelessness (2001-2004) before taking any initiative in the field of housing indicators. Finally, a study was commissioned by the European Commission on measurement of homelessness in the EU, which is currently feeding into ISG work on the preparation of housing and homelessness indicators.

### 3.1 EU social inclusion indicators

The 2001 Laeken monitoring framework was reviewed in 2006 for the newly launched streamlined strategy on social inclusion and protection – see [new common indicators](#) adopted on 22 May 2006. Indicators to be used for monitoring the social inclusion strand of the Social Protection and Social Inclusion Strategy largely draw from the original "Laeken indicators". Also, the methodological framework that was originally used to set up the list is maintained in its essence i.e. the distinction between primary and secondary indicators was maintained.

Accordingly, primary indicators are still a restricted number of "lead indicators which cover the broad fields that have been considered the most important elements in leading to social exclusion"; whereas secondary indicators support these lead indicators by describing in greater detail the nature of the problem or by describing other dimensions of the problem. EU countries are expected to use at least the primary indicators in their national strategy reports (reports submitted to the European Commission every 3 years), if only to emphasise that in the context of the EU social inclusion process poverty and social exclusion are a relative concept that encompasses income, access to essential durables, education, health care, **adequate housing**, distance from the labour market.

The agreed list contains 11 primary indicators, 3 secondary indicators and 11 context indicators. In practice, the primary list has been re-focused to contain only the most important indicators that describe the various dimensions of poverty and social exclusion. A few indicators that were in the primary list became secondary indicators. Other Laeken indicators are now included in the overarching portfolio, either because they are considered as more appropriate to monitor overall social cohesion (in which case they are only kept as context information) or because they are considered crucial indicators to monitor both social cohesion (and/or its interaction with employment and growth) and social exclusion and poverty (in this case, they are included in both lists). Finally, a few indicators were considered redundant and were dropped: persistent poverty calculated with a 50% threshold, long-term unemployment share and very long-term unemployment rate.

### 3.2 Deprivation and housing<sup>2</sup>

#### *Material deprivation indicators*

ISG delegates agreed to the transitional arrangements of using material deprivation statistics and indicators aggregated by dimension in the forthcoming reports on social inclusion of the Commission. They recommended that, as a first step, the presentation of such information be focused on two dimensions: "economic strain" (possibly merged with enforced lack of durables, even though this was not a common position of the ISG) and "housing". This topic was also largely discussed during the 2005 Luxembourg presidency conference "Taking forward the EU social inclusion process" (see more [here](#)).

Finally, the list of items used to calculate the deprivation indicators are grouped in three dimensions, relating to 1. economic strain 2. enforced lack of durables and 3. housing deprivation. The **housing deprivation dimension** consists of the following elements: leaking roof, damp walls/floors/foundations, or rot in the window frames or floor; accommodation too dark; bath or shower in dwelling; indoor flushing toilet for sole use of the household. After discussions of the ISG at the July 2006 meeting, it was decided to add "housing space" to the housing deprivation dimension. These different items and others were tested in the Eurobarometer survey on perceptions of poverty (see section 1.3) and may be integrated as core variables in the EU-SILC (see section 2.2).

The purpose of ISG work on material deprivation is to agree indicators of material living conditions that are not covered by income based poverty indicators. The main obstacle to agreement on the use of material deprivation indicators is the limited choice of items available in SILC and the fact that, so far, the data was not available for all countries. The ISG has therefore agreed on strategy to enhance the measurement of material deprivation through EU-SILC, by ultimately adapting the list of items aimed at capturing all key material deprivation situations that are to be monitored in a comparable way across countries – this will be done on the occasion of the next EU-SILC revision foreseen for 2011, after analysing the results of the 2009 EU-SILC module on material deprivation which will contain a broad list of items.

---

<sup>2</sup> See more about material deprivation indicators in OECD section below

New housing indicators were adopted in July 2009, based on the information available from the EU-SILC. The indicators are the following:

- Housing costs overburden rate:** Percentage of the population living in a household where total housing costs (net of housing allowances) represent more than 40% of the total disposable household income (net of housing allowances)
- Overcrowding rate:** Percentage of people living in an overcrowded household - All households and excluding single households.
- **Housing deprivation by item :** Percentage of the population deprived of each housing deprivation item, and by number of items
- Share of housing costs in total disposable household income:** Median of the distribution among individuals of the share of housing costs (net of housing allowances) in total disposable income (net of housing allowances) - median for the total population +  
- median for people at-risk-of poverty

### 3.3 Homelessness

The recommendations of the European Commission study on measurement of homelessness (2006-2007) were presented to the ISG in 2007, providing common tools to facilitate collection of data on housing deprivation, and ultimately to enhance the use of data at EU level. Examples of such reference tools are: a definition of homelessness, a classification of housing situations, data collection strategies.

The ISG agreed to take steps to encourage national statistics offices to adopt a harmonised definition of homelessness for data collection (while recognising alternative definitions may be used for policy purposes); encourage the Member States to adopt a national classification of services for homelessness; and to establish and maintain a national directory/database of services for homeless people.

## 4. EUROPEAN FOUNDATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS @

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions is a European Agency, one of the first to be established (in 1975) to work in specialised areas of EU policy. The Foundation carries out research and development projects, provides data and analysis for the formulation of EU policy on working and living conditions. The Foundation has a network of experts throughout the European Union which conducts research on its behalf. As part of its research base, the Foundation maintains a number of key monitoring tools, such as European surveys on working conditions and European Surveys on Quality of Life (EQLS). The EQLS initiative could be a very interesting monitoring tool, in parallel to EU-SILC. The Foundation could fill some gaps left by EU-SILC (namely in the area of homelessness).

This Foundation initiative on quality of life (see [website](#)) was launched to monitor and report on living conditions and quality of life in Europe. The first challenge was to develop a concept or approach to living conditions that was appropriate for the Foundation's mission, and therefore relevant for policy-makers in public authorities and among the social partners, specifically at EU level. 'Living conditions' clearly embraces a very wide area of policy interest, with a particular need to map and understand disparities associated with age, gender, health, ethnicity and region.

A report was prepared which identified the core issues on which the monitoring should focus and which examines existing sources of information. It proposed that the conceptual framework aim at going beyond the tracking of social change or social progress, but also contributing to understanding and promoting social progress. While recognising that other monitoring activities at EU level (European Commission – Eurostat) are valuable, the Foundation wants to go further and understand the causal processes at work underlying quality of life.

*Particularly relevant for FEANTSA*

As an input to the overall monitoring strategy, an interview-based survey on '**Quality of Life of Europeans**' was conducted in the EU member states and candidate countries (25+Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey) during 2003 and again in 2007. The questionnaire for the 2003 survey was sent to a sample of 1000 people in each country. A similar questionnaire (with a couple of additional questions) was used in 2007 .

The [results and findings](#) of the 2003 survey were published in 2005. This was then followed by 4 technical reports, one of them focusing on the “social dimensions of housing” in the EU. This report reveals a number of pressing problems with regard to housing and local environment. In addition, another report based on the data of the quality of life survey highlights housing as an important policy issue (“First European Quality of Life Survey: Key findings from a policy perspective”).

The [results and findings](#) of the 2007 survey are now available online in a report which offers a widening view of the diverse social realities in the 27 Member States, as well as covering Norway and the candidate countries of Turkey, Macedonia and Croatia. The report presents the views and experiences of people living in Europe across a set of key domains including living standards, deprivation, and housing. However, the EQLS surveys people living in households, so it does not capture the views of people living in institutions or who are homeless. As a result, the questions about security of tenure and quality of accommodation will not capture some of the most difficult experiences for people in Europe. Moreover, the section of the report focusing on material deprivation clearly underestimates the extent of deprivation in Europe given that people suffering from severe deprivation were not involved in the survey.

The European Foundation set up an interactive database of quality of life indicators, [EurLIFE](#), drawn from the Foundations own surveys and from other published sources. EurLIFE indicators (which includes housing indicators) covers the 25 current EU Member States and three candidate countries: Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey.

## 5. EU HOUSING MINISTERS –HOUSING STATISTICS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Over 10 years ago, the Ministers of Housing of the EU Member States decided to meet informally on an annual basis to exchange information and experiences on issues of common concern. Up until now, most of the meetings concentrated on the social aspects of housing policies. Access to housing for the most excluded people, immigrants and older people have been themes of the Informal Meeting in the past.

After the European Council in Lisbon in March 2000, the role of the Informal Meeting changed. The Informal Meeting decided to better link its work to the EU and in particular to the EU strategy to fight poverty and social exclusion. Until 2000, the European Commission was publishing Housing Statistics in the European Union. Because of an apparent loss of interest from the EU in housing, it stopped the production of this publication. The EU Housing Ministers took over the publication of these statistics and therefore play an important role in the collection of data on housing at EU level.

The ‘new’ publication follows exactly the same structure and includes the same data as the Commission publication. Since comparison with other countries is often of interest, this publication is meant to serve as a compact source of information on housing and enable individual EU Member States to compare their housing situation with other countries. Data are collected on four levels: general data consisting mainly of demographic information, data on the quality of the housing stock, data on the availability of dwellings and data on the affordability of housing. There is also an interesting section containing definitions of the different variables in the different Member States. In addition to the obvious intention of ensuring cross-country comparability in the data used, the goal has been to present interesting and policy-relevant housing statistics of good quality.

The Dutch Ministry for Housing was the first to carry out this research and to publish the book 'Housing Statistics in the EU – 2000'. The Finnish, Belgian and Danish Ministries respectively took over the initiative in 2001, 2002, and [2003](#). Data are provided by national ministries responsible for housing in the EU Member States as well as by the European Mortgage Federation (EMF) and Eurostat. The Czech and Swedish ministries published the [2004](#) edition of "Housing statistics in the European Union".<sup>3</sup> This publication includes a new chapter on the role of government in the housing market. Until 2004, none of the housing statistics publications had included any data on homelessness. FEANTSA worked with the Czech and Swedish Ministries to introduce a section on homeless statistics in the "Housing Statistics in the European Union – 2004". Moreover, this tenth edition of the publication is the first to give detailed information on housing and living conditions for all 25 member states of the new enlarged European Union.

The housing data for [2005](#) was gathered by the Italian ministry of transport and infrastructure. No ministry has taken the initiative to coordinate the collection of housing statistics in 2006, 2007, 2008 or 2009.

## 6 EUROPEAN TYPOLOGY OF HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING EXCLUSION (ETHOS)

@

Combating and preventing homelessness are amongst the common objectives of the EU social inclusion strategy, and is one of the societal problems treated under the new streamlined social protection and inclusion strategy. In order to tackle homelessness in EU27, it is crucial to have data on the numbers and profiles of homeless people. Specific measures are needed to combat different forms of homelessness – rough sleeping, people living in temporary accommodation, ex-prisoners, homeless women victims of domestic violence, etc).

To this end, FEANTSA developed a European Typology on Homelessness and housing exclusion (ETHOS) to facilitate data collection, policy development and research on homelessness. It is important to note that this typology is an open exercise which makes abstraction of existing legal definitions in the EU members states. ETHOS is a "home"-based definition that uses the housing, social and legal domains to create a broad typology of homelessness and housing exclusion. ETHOS classifies homeless people according to their living situation:

- *rooflessness* (without a shelter of any kind, sleeping rough)
- *houselessness* (with a place to sleep but temporary in institutions or shelter)
- living in *insecure housing* (threatened with severe exclusion due to insecure tenancies, eviction, domestic violence)
- living in *inadequate housing* (in caravans on illegal campsites, in unfit housing, in extreme overcrowding).

Homelessness is perceived and tackled differently according to the country. ETHOS was developed through a review of existing definitions of homelessness and the realities of homelessness which service providers are faced with on a daily basis. ETHOS categories therefore attempt to cover all living situations which amount to forms of homelessness across Europe. Different target groups (children, women, men, older people from different ethnic or immigrant populations and with different disabilities/difficulties) can come under one or more of these categories.

The ETHOS approach confirms that homelessness is a process (rather than a static phenomenon) that affects many vulnerable households at different points in their lives. The 2005 Review of Statistics on Homelessness in Europe of the European Observatory on Homelessness states that "Policies to address homelessness include three main elements prevention, accommodation and support. Prevention policies imply an understanding of both the causes of homelessness and the pathways into homelessness. Accommodation provision involves elements of emergency or temporary accommodation and transitional accommodation as well as permanent housing (with or without support). Increasingly policies to address homelessness recognise the need for support as well as housing and that support is needed for people who are homeless, have been homeless or

<sup>3</sup> In 2004, the Irish Presidency also produced a report on "Housing Developments in European Countries" ([EN](#))

may become homeless. This understanding of the policy basis indicates the need for an understanding of the process of homelessness and housing deprivation as well as the profiles of homeless people. ETHOS has been developed using this pathways approach."

The development of ETHOS has been approached as a dynamic process by which the typology can be refined as the understanding of homelessness and housing exclusion improves. The approach is that the conceptual model is robust and the four conceptual categories remain the basis of the typology. However, the operational categories and sub-categories can be reviewed, and more accurately defined, in order to make the typology fit for policy, monitoring and data collection purposes. ETHOS was therefore reviewed annually between 2005 and 2007 through the Research Observatory annual Review of homeless statistics in Europe, leading to slight revisions of the typology's operational categories. The final version of ETHOS is available on-line in the following languages: English, French, Italian, Greek, Czech, Hungarian, Estonian, Polish, Romanian, Austrian, Flemish, Dutch, and Danish.

This year (2009), the FEANTSA Research Observatory is reviewing homeless statistics, using the ETHOS typology as a matrix. This Review will shortly be available [here](#).

## UNITED NATIONS

This second part on the “**United Nations**” takes a closer look at the work of UN agencies like the UN Statistics Division (which takes a global view focusing especially on regions of the world like Asia, Africa, Latin America), UNECE (which focuses mainly on Europe), UN-Habitat, and the country-reporting to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

### 1. UN STATISTICS DIVISION @

The Statistics Division compiles statistics from many international sources and produces global updates, including the Statistical Yearbook, World Statistics Pocketbook and yearbooks in specialized fields of statistics. It also provides countries with specifications of the best methods of compiling information so that data from different sources can be readily compared.

The Statistics Division's main functions are:

- The collection, processing and dissemination of statistical information;
- The standardization of statistical methods, classifications and definitions;
- The technical cooperation programme; and
- The coordination of international statistical programmes and activities.

To carry out these functions, it provides – among other things - a global centre for data on international trade, national accounts, energy, industry, environment, transport and demographic and **social statistics** gathered from many national and international sources. The UN Statistics division is divided into several sections. One section deals with '[Demographic and social statistics](#)'. This section maintains a database of social indicators and monitors the results of recent major United Nations conferences on children, population and development, social development and women. It covers a wide range of subjects such as education, [housing and its environment](#), health, water, etc.

## 1.1 World Population and Housing Census Programme (@)

The United Nations promulgates a World Population and Housing Census Programme every decade to encourage countries to carry out a census on population and housing. This programme is coordinated by the UN Statistics division. The current 2010 United Nations round of population and housing censuses started on 1 January 2005, as endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission at its 36th session. The 2010 round of censuses covers the period of 2005 to 2014.

National population and housing censuses provide statistics and indicators for assessing the situation of various special population groups, such as those affected by gender issues, children, youth, the elderly, persons with an impairment/disability/handicap and the homeless and migrant populations, and changes therein (see [1995 UN Resolution](#)). So, in accordance with UNECE/Eurostat guidelines, homeless persons are in principle included in all censuses because they belong to the “usual population of the country”. In practice, however, data collection varies and the coverage is less than complete.

The United Nations Statistical Commission, at its 36th session (March 2005), approved the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses and established the Expert Group on the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses. This Expert Group, in turn, proposed the formation of working groups and technical subgroups to carry out its mandate in regard to the revision and update of the global United Nations Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses. This review was carried out by the UNECE (UN Economic Commission for Europe - see section 2 below) together with the Conference of European Statisticians. The [Revised Principles and Recommendations](#) were adopted in June 2007.

These Recommendations contain definitions of homelessness to assist countries with the collection of data on homelessness in their population and housing census (although census methods are not the best way of capturing homelessness, especially on houseless and roofless, given that a census by definition only reaches out to households). In addition, the Demographic and Social Statistics Branch of the United Nations Statistics Division publishes [Newsletters](#) which summarise recent developments, events, workshop results, etc.

FEANTSA is following this process closely in Europe where the process is managed by the UNECE and Eurostat (see more under section 2 “UNECE” below) to ensure that all statistics offices collect information on homelessness during the 2011 round of censuses. The Data collection group of FEANTSA carried out a survey of all national statistics offices in June 2008 and summarised the results in a [paper](#) : “2011 Round of Population and Housing Censuses: FEANTSA Recommendations for the enumeration of homeless people on census night”.

## 1.2 Expert groups (@)

The UN statistics division organises expert groups on different areas of statistics. In 2008, the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on the Scope and Content of Social Statistics was convened in New York from 9 to 12 September 2008. The meeting was organized by the Social and Housing Statistics Section of the Demographic and Social Statistics Branch of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). The Expert Group Meeting was planned as a follow up activity to the *Seminar on New Directions in Social Statistics* , held on 22 February 2008 in New York and which focused on national practices of collecting, processing and disseminating social statistics.

The meeting aimed to identify the scope and content of contemporary social statistics in order to establish areas that need to be addressed by an international action plan. The meeting brought together national, regional and international experts on social statistics. They focused on a number of the themes, including “Economic resources” which looked at poverty measurement. The expert group put forward a number of proposals for activities to be undertaken in the framework of the international action plan on social statistics – this included focusing on emerging issues such as social exclusion, deprivation, and economic disadvantage. See meeting documents and reports on the Expert groups webpage.

### 1.3 City groups on social and poverty statistics (@)

The [36th session](#) of the Statistical Commission was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 1 to 4 March 2005. Representatives from national statistical institutes also meet informally to address specific problems in statistical methods. Some of these working groups became formally known as "city groups". These groups were allowed to fix their own working agenda and are relatively independent in their work. It was recognised that these groups were an innovative way to use country resources to improve and speed up the international standards development process. They were therefore quite flexible and free in terms of action even though the Statistical commission regularly discussed the work of the city-groups. City groups are informal groups of experts primarily from national statistical agencies. Participation by representatives is voluntary as is the existence of the group itself. A number of these meetings were supported by the European Commission (Eurostat).

Two of these city groups were particularly interesting for FEANTSA: the Siena group on Social Statistics and the Rio group on Poverty Statistics. Although both groups no longer exist since 2006, the following section provides some basic information and some links to the reports of the two groups.

#### *The Siena Group on Social Statistics (@)*

Relevant topics considered by the Siena group were social reporting and social accounting; **monitoring social exclusion** in education and labour markets; and accounting in social statistics and indicators for social development. Its purpose was to promote and coordinate international cooperation in the areas of social statistics by focusing on topics such as social indicators. The first meeting was organised in 1993. Most of the EU member States participated along with some candidate countries, the United States, Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), European Commission, Eurostat, OECD, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), United Nations Statistics Division, United Nations Human Development Program (UNDP).

The Helsinki 2005 meeting of the Siena Group was the last meeting of this Group. The activities in the area of international harmonisation and development of social statistics have been taken over by a biannual joint UNECE/EUROSTAT Meeting on Social Statistics. The issue of homelessness and housing exclusion is not on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting and there are no activities planned. However, this issue could become an item on the agenda of forthcoming meetings.

Contact: Paul van der Laan [plan@cbs.nl](mailto:plan@cbs.nl)

#### *The Rio Group of Poverty Statistics (@)*

The main objectives of the expert group were to harness the experience and concerns of different groups and organizations in the world that are working in the measurement, interpretation and use of poverty statistics, especially when the work was being done by or in close contact with statistical offices. The identification of the indicators, methodologies, and statistical sources used allowed for the preparation of a document or reports containing the state of the art in matters of poverty measurements, common procedures and best practices. The work of the Rio group mainly focused on developing countries. The last meeting took place in Rio de Janeiro, on 6-8 December 2004. The Rio Group prepared a compendium on practices in the measurement of poverty (with special reference to developing countries). The Compendium has been available **since end 2006**. After finishing this project, the Group was disbanded.

Contact : Eduardo Pereira Nunes [epnunes@ibge.gov.br](mailto:epnunes@ibge.gov.br)

## 2. UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) @

UNECE is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations. Its primary goal is to encourage greater economic cooperation among its 55 Member Countries. Among other subjects, it focuses on human settlements and statistics. Its [statistical](#) division includes social and demographic statistics.

### 2.1 Population and Housing Censuses in Europe (@)

In the framework of the World Population and Housing Census Programme (see above), the UNECE was given the task to review and update the global United Nations Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses. On the Population and Housing Censuses webpage, you will find the full Principles and Recommendations and other useful sources which provide information on different census methodologies, different topics covered, and methodologies used for hard-to-reach groups like homeless people.

In conformity with the EU regulation on population and housing census (see [above](#)), all EU countries have to collect information on **housing arrangements** in their census which includes four categories:

- people living in conventional dwellings,
- people living in non-conventional dwellings,
- people living in institutions,
- people who have no usual place of residence (e.g. homeless people).

To facilitate exchanges between national statistics offices in preparation of the 2010 census round, the UNECE organises [joint UNECE/Eurostat meetings](#) every year. A Joint UNECE-Eurostat Meeting on Population and Housing Censuses organized in Geneva in [May 2008](#) provided such an opportunity for exchanges. Topics discussed included census quality assurance and evaluation, difficult-to-measure census topics, and census data editing and validation. The next Joint Meeting will take place in Geneva in [October 2009](#). Representatives of FEANTSA and the Mphasis project will be present at this meeting. In this meeting, countries will exchange experiences with regard to the compliance with the CES Recommendations in the planning and conduction of the censuses of the 2010 round. Expected contributions could include reviews of different problems and issues faced in countries, or in-depth discussion of specific issues, such as: implementation of the definition of place of usual residence and treatment of students or other population groups; possible implications of the adoption of a specific census methodology (including the register-based census or other non-traditional census methods) on compliance with the CES Recommendations. So far, the UK, France, Serbia, and FEANTSA have submitted papers for the workshop. Supporting papers may be submitted until September 2009.

### 2.2. Committee on Housing and Land Management (@)

In 1947, the Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) set up a Panel on Housing Problems, which later evolved into the Committee on Human Settlements (CHS), and after the reform in 2005/2006 into the Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM). The Committee is an intergovernmental body of all ECE member States, it provides a forum for the compilation, dissemination and exchange of information and experience on **housing**, urban development, land administration, national and local objectives and policies. Through various workshops, research on urban issues, analyses of housing sector and related publications, the Committee advises member countries on human settlements policies and strategies and encourages their practical implementation. The Committee supports the economic and social stabilisation of central and eastern Europe by suggesting innovative ways of cooperation between different levels of government. The Committee works closely with the European Union, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Council of Europe, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), and other UN regional commissions and specialised agencies.



The programme of the Committee has various activities, including the work on the “[Country profiles of housing sector](#)” which represents a tool for Governments to analyse their housing policies, strategies, institutional and financial frameworks for the housing sector and to compare the progress made internationally. At its core is an analytical study on the housing sector, drafted by independent international experts. It draws on the Committee's work on housing and building statistics. Recommendations for improving policies and practices are an essential part of the programme. Until now, the country profiles prepared by the Committee have only referred to Central and Eastern European countries.

Until 2006, the Committee worked on publishing Housing statistics (see “[Human settlements statistics](#)”), together with the Conference of European Statisticians, to develop and improve international human settlements statistics. Every two years, the Committee published the *Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe and North America*. However, this publication has now been discontinued,

### 3. UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) @

UN-Habitat was established in 1978 as the lead agency within the United Nations system for coordinating activities in the field of human settlements. UN-Habitat is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all. Until recently official statistics on housing were collected by the United Nations Statistics Division on a quinquennial basis through the Human Settlement Statistics Questionnaire in collaboration with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme. The most recent questionnaires were sent to countries and areas in 1992 and 1999. The results of this data collection were published in the [1995 Compendium of Human Settlement Statistics](#) and [2001 Compendium of Human Settlement Statistics](#). The publication includes statistical tables about households (currently figures and projections) and housing units by country or by area, urban and rural, and cities for the latest available year.

#### 3.1 Global Urban Observatory: a Monitoring tool (@)

In order to monitor and assess the implementation of the UN-Habitat Agenda and to monitor and evaluate global urban conditions and trends, the UN set up the Global Urban Observatory consisting of two main components: the [Statistics programme](#) which regularly collects data from countries and cities, the [Urban Indicator programme](#) which regularly collects indicators from more than 200 cities. Both programmes maintain online databases which have been merged into one to form the [Global Urban Observatory databases \(urban indicators, statistics and city profiles\)](#). Although homelessness is sometimes one of the topics, it is very rare that data will be displayed.

#### 3.2 Global Campaign for Secure Tenure (@)

The Global Campaign for Secure Tenure was designed to take forward the commitment of Governments to providing Adequate Shelter for All, one of the two main themes of the Habitat Agenda. The Campaign identifies the provision of secure tenure as essential for a sustainable shelter strategy, and as a vital element in the promotion of Housing Rights.

[Indicators](#) in several fields are provided in the framework of this Campaign. They include secure tenure indicators (tenure type, homelessness, eviction, etc.), statistics on the number of people per room, statistics on owner occupancy, Statistics on Housing Units, Statistics on Water supply and sanitation.

### 3.3 United Nations Housing Rights Programme - UNHRP (@)

The UNHRP was launched in 2002, as a joint initiative by UN-Habitat and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The development objective of the UNHRP is to assist States and other stakeholders with the implementation of their commitments in the Habitat Agenda to ensure the full and progressive realisation of the right to adequate housing as provided for in international instruments.

One of the activities of the first phase of the UNHRP focuses on monitoring and evaluation of progress of the realisation of housing rights (including development of housing rights indicators). The background paper for the 2003 expert group meeting on housing rights monitoring presents a framework for the development of a set of housing rights indicators. A set of 6 housing rights elements and 17 housing rights indicators (including scale and scope of forced evictions and homelessness) is proposed in the paper. The six elements are housing adequacy, security of tenure, scale and scope of homelessness, right to non-discrimination, national legal protection, and acceptance of international legal standards). These should form the foundation on which the set of housing rights indicators is ultimately built. Element no. 3 is “scale and scope of homelessness” with a proposed indicator: “Number:1000 homeless persons (no. homeless over past 12 months).”

Once a final set of indicators has been agreed upon, these indicators will form the foundation for the establishment of a global system for monitoring the full and progressive realisation of the human right to adequate housing, as provided for in international instruments. See [full paper](#)

However, the OHCHR in its efforts to harmonize indicators for several rights and in cooperation with the treaty bodies has launched an initiative to establish a framework of indicators for 12 human rights, including the right to housing. Work on the operationalisation of the UNHRP housing rights indicators has therefore been delayed in order to be integrated in a large scale framework initiative of the OHCHR.

## 4. OFFICE OF THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS @

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) represents the world's commitment to universal ideals of human dignity. It has a unique mandate from the international community to promote and protect all human rights.

### 4.1 Monitoring Implementation of Human Rights Treaties

There are seven UN human rights treaty bodies that monitor implementation of the core [international human rights treaties](#):

- Human Rights Committee (HRC)
- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
- Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Committee Against Torture (CAT)
- Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW)

These human rights treaty bodies are committees of independent experts that monitor implementation of the core international human rights treaties. They are created in accordance with the provisions of the treaty that they monitor.

[Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights \(CESCR\)](#) (the second in the list of Committees above) monitors implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966, which is most relevant in terms of the right to housing and tackling homelessness through Article 11 of the Covenant on the right to adequate standard of living (which includes the right to adequate housing).



All [countries](#) who have signed the Covenant are obliged to submit regular reports to the Committee on how the rights are being implemented. States must report initially within two years of accepting the Covenant and thereafter every five years. The Committee examines each report and addresses its concerns and recommendations to the State party in the form of “concluding observations”.

The reports submitted to the UN between 2004 and 2006 are available [on-line](#) and generally contain interesting data on homelessness and housing. Recent reports have been submitted by Estonia, the [Netherlands](#), [Poland](#) and [France](#), all of which contain data on the scale of homelessness and policies developed to tackle the phenomenon.

#### 4.2 Human rights indicators (@)

At the request of the inter-committee meeting of the treaty bodies, OHCHR, in consultation with a panel of experts, has developed a [conceptual and methodological framework](#) for identifying and using indicators to promote and monitor the implementation of human rights (including housing rights). The framework recommends the development of *structural*, *process* and *outcome* indicators. This configuration of indicators should help assess the steps being taken by States in addressing their obligations – from commitments and acceptance of international human rights standards (*structural* indicators) to efforts being made to meet the obligations that flow from the standards (*process* indicators) and on to the results of those efforts (*outcome* indicators).

The list of indicators on the right to housing include the following process indicators: “Proportion of homeless population that was extended the use of public and community based shelters in the reporting period” and “Annual average of homeless persons per 100,000 population”, as well as other relevant housing-related indicators. [More...](#)

The adopted methodology focuses primarily on indicators that are or can be compiled by official statistical systems using administrative records and statistical surveys.

## 1. COUNCIL OF EUROPE @

The Council of Europe is an inter-governmental organisation consisting of 47 Member countries whose main aim is to promote human rights.

### 1.1 Social cohesion indicators(@)

A Social Cohesion and Quality of Life division was set up by the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers in 1998 in order to undertake, in close cooperation with the Member States, conceptual and methodological analysis on issues such as policies for social inclusion of vulnerable groups. The overall objective is to support the implementation of the [Strategy for Social Cohesion](#) (adopted by the Committee of Ministers in July 2000) and fight against poverty in member states. One of the activities of the directorate general of social cohesion has been the preparation of a [Guide on the use of indicators for social cohesion](#) which includes indicators related to housing exclusion and homelessness.

The guide suggests on this reason four levels of analysis moving from the most general to the most specific (Guide pp 69-70):

- the first level is designed to assess the general trend of social cohesion: in other words to see whether there is a shift towards more social cohesion or less social cohesion in the area in question, and in which respects the trend is mainly positive or mainly negative;
- the second level is intended to analyse social cohesion as a whole, by looking at the constituent parts of well-being (situations) and linking these to the action taken in the public arena, whether by the public authorities or civil society (citizens and companies);
- the third level will look in greater detail at social cohesion in specific areas of life (eight such areas are given);
- finally, the fourth level looks at social cohesion by focusing on sensitive situations, particularly socially vulnerable groups who are more easily subject to situations giving rise to exclusion and who, therefore, provide a good indicator of social cohesion (six vulnerable groups are looked at). This final level also plays a verification role (verifying sensitive situations).

The first level of assessment (general trends) includes two indicators for measuring of “equity in housing” are suggested: proportion of homeless in the population and population without access to quality housing (see Guide, p.110).

The second level of assessment (analysing social cohesion as a whole) lists indicators to measure the validity of action to ensure social and economic rights are respected which again include the indicator: “proportion of homeless in the population”. There are also indicators to measure the “ability of society to ensure autonomy and personal development” including the existence of “organisations supporting the reintegration of homeless people”

The third level of assessment (areas of life) lists “housing and surroundings” as one of the areas, with a long list of indicators (Guide p.132) which include homelessness-related indicators.

The fourth level of assessment (looking at socially vulnerable groups) also includes homelessness-related indicators, namely considering if accommodation for homeless women exists as an indicator of how women in vulnerable groups are treated.

This guide will serve as the operational tool which completes the Strategy for Social Cohesion (revised in March 2004) of the Council of Europe and provides a standard-measuring instrument for social cohesion. This approach is currently being tested in the French city of Mulhouse, to ascertain its feasibility but also to specify and clarify the methods of consultation and construction of joint indicators.

## 1.2 European Social Charter: Reporting on implementation of housing rights (@)

The European Social Charter (a treaty of the Council of Europe) guarantees social and economic human rights), including the right to housing (article 31). The Charter was adopted in 1961 and revised in 1996. The European Committee of Social Rights ([ECSR](#)) is the body responsible for monitoring compliance in the states party to the Charter.

The right to housing is interpreted as follows:

- “1. With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to housing, the Parties undertake to take measures designed to promote access to housing of an adequate standard.
2. With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to housing, the Parties undertake to take measures designed to prevent and reduce homelessness with a view to its gradual elimination.
3. With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to housing, the Parties undertake to take measures designed to make the price of housing accessible to those without adequate resources.”

([Interpretation](#) of the right to housing)

Every year, the countries who have signed and ratified the European Social Charter submit a report indicating how they implement the European Social Charter provisions. Each report covers different provisions, so the reports do not always contain data on housing rights. The countries follow a specific [calendar](#) and a specific [structure](#) including a structure for assessing compliance with article 31. The [national reports](#) contain some data on homelessness.

## 2. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) @

The OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) groups 30 countries in a unique forum to discuss, develop and refine economic and social policies. They compare experiences, seek answers to common problems and work to co-ordinate domestic and international policies to help members and non-members deal with an increasingly globalised world. Their exchanges may lead to agreements to act in a formal way (legally binding agreement) or to ‘soft law’ (non-legally binding).

The OECD collects statistics needed for the analysis of economic and social developments by its in-house analysts, committees, working parties, and Member country governments from statistical agencies and other institutions of its Member countries (see [data sources](#)). Most of the OECD’s statistical outputs are made available to the public through electronic and paper publications and now through the [Statistics Portal](#).

### 2.1 “Society at a glance”: OECD social indicators publication (@)

During the preparation of the 2001 publication, a report was written called ‘social indicators: a proposed framework and structure’. In this report a comparison is made between the listing of 1982 OECD social indicators and the newly proposed list. While housing was part of the list in 1982 (dimension of housing, access to outdoor space, access to housing amenities), housing is not included in the new list. The OECD social indicators include both context indicators that illustrate national differences in social trends, and social status and response indicators, categorised in four broad and interdependent areas of social policy: self-sufficiency, equity, health and social cohesion’.

The 2009 edition of “Society at a glance” is now available (although not on-line). It offers a concise overview of quantitative social trends and policies across the OECD. This 2009 edition includes a wide range of information on social issues – such as demography and family characteristics, employment and unemployment, poverty and inequality, social and health care expenditure, and work and life satisfaction –as well as a guide to help readers understand the structure of OECD social indicators. In addition to updating some of the indicators from previous editions, Society at a Glance 2009 adds several new and innovative social indicators, including adult height, perceived health status, risky youth behaviour and bullying. For the first time, the report also provides a condensed set of headline social indicators summarising social well-being in OECD countries.

## 2.2 OECD social, employment and migration working papers (@)

The Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs of the OECD regularly commissions working papers on these three policy fields.

In 2006, the OECD published a working paper on "[Measures of Material deprivation in OECD countries](#)" which examines the use of non-monetary indicators of poverty, namely material deprivation, in a number of OECD countries (including European countries, Japan, Australia, Canada, the US) and the overlap between material deprivation and income indicators. This paper also looks at the development of multi-dimensional measures of material deprivation in these countries. Most measures of material deprivation in OECD countries contain a housing conditions component (covering both housing quality and housing affordability).

## 2.3 OECD Economic surveys (@)

Economic surveys are published every 1 or 2 years for each country member of the OECD. These focus amongst other things on the functioning of the housing market and general housing finance, which have an impact on macroeconomic stability and monetary policy.

These reports sometimes have interesting housing-related statistics. These reports are not available on line, but can be ordered at any OECD bookshop.

## 3. European System of Social indicators (EUSI) @

The EUSI is developing a theoretically and methodologically well-grounded selection of social indicators, which can be used as instruments to continually observe and analyse the development of welfare and quality of life of societies across Europe as well as changes in the social structure at the European Level. This was not primarily meant to monitor EU social policy, even though the variables chosen are consistent with EU policy concerns.

The EUSI includes indicators of goal attainments as well as more general indicators of social change. While the former are direct measures of individual and societal welfare, the latter are descriptive indicators measuring structural, attitudinal and value changes in a society.

The EUSI covers 13 life domains. [Housing](#) is one of them. The life domains considered correspond to some extent to EU Policy concerns but other domains, which also constitute important aspects of quality of life, have been added as well. The Housing domain contains different indicators including rooms per person, percentage of homeless people, percentage of owners, and others. However, the data on homelessness is not available yet.

The indicator system covers the previous EU-15 countries, Norway, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, as well as Japan and the U.S. Successively, all the EU-27 member states will be covered systematically, as is already the case for numerous indicators already.

August 2009  
[Liz.gosme@FEANTSA.org](mailto:Liz.gosme@FEANTSA.org)

## Annex I: ETHOS – European typology on homelessness and housing exclusion

	Operational Category	Living Situation	Generic Definition	
Conceptual Category v	ROOFLESS	1 People Living Rough	1.1 Public space or external space	Living in the streets or public spaces, without a shelter that can be defined as living quarters
		2 People in emergency accommodation	2.1 Night shelter	People with no usual place of residence who make use of overnight shelter, low threshold shelter
	HOUSELESS	3 People in accommodation for the homeless	3.1 Homeless hostel	Where the period of stay is intended to be short term
			3.2 Temporary Accommodation	
			3.3 Transitional supported accommodation	
	4 People in Women's Shelter	4.1 Women's shelter accommodation	Women accommodated due to experience of domestic violence and where the period of stay is intended to be short term	
	5 People in accommodation for immigrants	5.1 Temporary accommodation / reception centres	Immigrants in reception or short term accommodation due to their immigrant status	
		5.2 Migrant workers accommodation		
	6 People due to be released from institutions	6.1 Penal institutions	No housing available prior to release Stay longer than needed due to lack of housing No housing identified (e.g by 16th birthday)	
		6.2 Medical institutions <sup>9</sup>		
		6.3 Children's institutions / homes		
	7 People receiving longer-term support (due to homelessness)	7.1 Residential care for older homeless people	Long stay accommodation with care for formerly homeless people (normally more than one year)	
		7.2 Supported accommodation for formerly homeless people		
INSECURE	8 People living in insecure accommodation	8.1 Temporarily with family/friends	Living in conventional housing but not the usual or place of residence due to lack of housing Occupation of dwelling with no legal tenancy Illegal occupation of a dwelling Occupation of land with no legal rights	
		8.2 No legal (sub)tenancy		
		8.3 Illegal occupation of land		
9 People living under threat of eviction	9.1 Legal orders enforced (rented)	Where orders for eviction are operative Where mortgagor has legal order to re-possess		
	9.2 Re-possession orders (owned)			
10 People living under threat of violence	10.1 Police recorded incidents	Where police action is taken to ensure place of safety for victims of domestic violence		
INADEQUATE	11 People living in temporary / non-conventional structures	11.1 Mobile homes	Not intended as place of usual residence Makeshift shelter, shack or shanty Semi-permanent structure hut or cabin	
		11.2 Non-conventional building		
		11.3 Temporary structure		
12 People living in unfit housing	12.1 Occupied dwellings unfit for habitation	Defined as unfit for habitation by national legislation or building regulations		
13 People living in extreme overcrowding	13.1 Highest national norm of overcrowding	Defined as exceeding national density standard for floor-space or useable rooms		

## **Annex II: Social and housing indicators**

[EU social inclusion indicators](#)

[EU urban audit quality of life indicators](#)

[UN-Habitat secure tenure indicators](#)

[UN housing rights indicators](#)

[OHCHR Human rights indicators](#)

[Council of Europe Guide of social cohesion indicators](#)

[OECD social indicators publication](#)

[European System of Social Indicators](#)

[European Foundation of the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions](#)