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Portugal

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<p>Key Statistics</p>	<p>There is no concrete data, so far, from official entities about the number of homeless people at national level in Portugal. However "Planning and Intervention for Homeless People Nuclei" (NPISA (see below)) and homeless services provide important information at national level. There is an attempt to consolidate and standardise the procedures for collecting information and data.</p> <p>Recent Statistics</p> <p>In 2009, a survey by the Social Security Institute identified 2,133 homeless people on one night in Portugal. Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 922 were sleeping rough (ETHOS 1.1); • 1,088 were living in homeless shelters (ETHOS 2.1); • 43 were institutionalised (in mental health centres and prisons) (ETHOS 6.1 and 6.2); • 80 were uncategorised. <p>63% of the people surveyed were located in Oporto and Lisbon.</p> <p>In Lisbon in 2011, a network of social institutions (including street work teams, housing centres, social support and inclusion services) participated in a statistical study, realised in one night and identified 2,399 individuals (ETHOS1.1 and ETHOS 2.1). 90% of the people surveyed were of working age and 22% were less than 35 years old. 86% were male and 14% female. Regarding nationality, 68% were Portuguese.</p> <p>NPISA Oporto provides data for 2013, reporting 1,300 homeless people in accommodation and around 300 homeless sleeping in the street per night.</p> <p>In 2013, the organisation AMI (<i>Assistência Médica Internacional</i>) supported 1,679 people who were in a homeless situation, of which 546 were being supported by AMI for the first time. The majority were men (76%). 50% were aged between 40 and 59 years old 20% 30 to 39 years. Most of them were born in Portugal (79%), followed by PALOP countries (Angola, Cape Verde, Sao Tome and Principe, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau) (12%), other European Union countries (3%) and other countries, including Brazil and India (2%).</p> <p>The Social Security Institute states that its official data from 2013 is still being compiled and handled. However, initial unapproved data shows that 4,420 people were recorded in "active homeless situations" over the year on the social security information system. This means that they had an open case, i.e. were receiving support from social workers. 76% were male and 24% female.</p>
<p>Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People</p>	<p>The lack of up-to-date national data makes it difficult to describe overall trends. However, data collected about service use gives an indication of some trends. Between 2008 and 2013, the number of homeless people that AMI supported increased by 16% (2008: 1,445 homeless people; 2013: 1,679 homeless people). The number was practically the same in 2012. On the</p>

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	<p>other hand, the number of new cases of homelessness decreased by around 15% in this period (2008, 640 new homeless cases; 2013, 546 new homeless cases) but increased by 8% (more 42 people) compared to 2012. The social services report a general increase of the demand for food support but that is also due to increased of poverty, unemployed and reduced of the social benefits.</p>
<p>Change in Profile of Homeless People</p>	<p>The 2009 survey by the Social Security Institute reported that 82% of the homeless people were male, 82% had Portuguese nationality, more than 60% were aged between 30 and 40, and 31% had received secondary education. 28% had problems related to drug addiction, 19% suffered from alcoholism, and 11% had mental health issues.</p> <p>AMI has collected profile data on new clients in 2008 and 2013, and reports the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26% were women in 2008, and 26% were women in 2013 • 79% were born in Portugal in 2013, compared with 66% in 2008 • 10% were born in PALOP (Portuguese-speaking African countries) in 2013, compared with 13% in 2007 • 29% were under 30 in 2013, compared with 16% in 2008 • 14% were beneficiaries of the Social Inclusion Income (RSI) in 2013, compared to 20% in 2008
<p>National Strategy</p>	<p>National Strategy for the Integration of Homeless People – Prevention, Intervention and Follow-Up, 2009-15</p> <p>In 2009, the Portuguese ‘National Strategy for the Integration of Homeless People – Prevention, Intervention and Follow-Up, 2009-15’ was launched. However, the progress that was made on implementation in the early phase has been largely halted in the context of the economic crisis.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <p>The overall aims of the strategy are to enhance the evidence base on homelessness through the adoption of an agreed definition and a shared information and monitoring system and to promote quality in homelessness services and responses. The strategy contains the following specific targets:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 80% of homeless people should have a ‘case manager’; 2. No-one should have to stay overnight on the street for more than 24 hours owing to the lack of an alternative; 3. No-one should leave an institution without having all necessary help to secure a place to live. <p>The strategy has not been adopted by the Council of Ministers and has not featured in European reporting processes such as the National Reform Programme. A lack of formal political backing has had a very negative impact on implementation. At the time of its public presentation, a budget of €75 million was announced. However, this budget has not been allocated. Given the crisis, it seems unlikely that this will happen in the near future.</p> <p>Governance</p> <p>The strategy is coordinated by the Institute of Social Security, a public institute created in 2001 under the aegis of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. To develop the strategy, an Inter-Institutional Group was formed, with representatives from public and non-profit social service providers. The group is now known as GIMAE (Implementation and Evaluation of the Strategy Group). At local level, implementation groups called NPISA (Planning and Intervention for</p>

	Homeless People Nuclei) have been established. The strategy included 17 NPISAs but there are currently 14.
Targeted Prevention	<p>Preventive action in order to avoid situations of homelessness arising from eviction or discharge from institutions is one of the main policy actions set out in the national strategy.</p> <p>However, a new urban lease law has been approved under the EU-IMF Adjustment Programme, aiming at faster eviction procedures and introducing a sunset clause of five years for contracts currently under rent control. Eviction due to non-payment of rent in urban residential buildings rose by approximately 9.7% between 2008 and 2010.</p> <p>In terms of discharge from institutions, people who leave psychiatric or therapeutic hospital centres tend to leave with planned accommodation. This is not generally the case for former prisoners.</p>
Housing-Led Approaches	<p>In theory, Portugal has adopted a housing-led strategy but this is not yet an operational reality. The national strategy emphasises housing as a key response to homelessness for the first time. It stresses that people should not stay in temporary accommodation for long periods and that permanent housing solutions should be found. Homelessness has traditionally been understood as a social issue, so this was an important evolution. The challenge is now implementation.</p> <p>Housing First is an increasingly important intervention model. A Housing First project for 65 mentally ill homeless people has been developed in Lisbon. A protocol was signed in 2009 between the Association for Research and Psychosocial Integration (AEIPS), the Higher Institute for Applied Psychology, Pathways to Housing, the Social Security Institute of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Professor Marybeth Shinn of Vanderbilt University in the US. €75,000 of initial funding was provided, followed by €225,000 in 2011 and a further €423,159 in 2012. The programme has achieved excellent results - 85 to 90% of residents have stayed in their homes since the project was launched. However, the initial funding was not continued after 2012. Fortunately, the Lisbon City Council Social Emergency Fund, with the support of other local institutions, will fund the project. This project is also being implemented in Cascais with the support of Cascais City Council and Tourism of Portugal.</p> <p>The Lisbon City Council has also financed the project “É UMA CASA” Mouraria, carried out by the association CRESCER NA MAIOR. This is a Housing First project in the Mouraria area where there is a concentration of homeless people, drug addicts and prostitutes. The purpose of this project is to support people who have been homeless for a long time and for whom traditional solutions have not provided a way out of homelessness.</p>
Quality of Homeless Services	<p>There is no legislation or integrated policy to define the quality of the services provided to the homeless.</p> <p>Although far from ideal, the institutions working with homeless people have been working hard to improve the quality not only in the services they provide, but also in the living conditions. However, these efforts take place under challenging financial constraints. Dormitories with excessive numbers of beds persist but reducing their number would mean alternatives with no support and surveillance, like hotels/guest houses.</p> <p>There is a problem of homeless people staying in guesthouses without adequate support. The quality of this is very low. In the framework of the strategy, there was an attempt to create new “lodging centres” to provide accommodation over the medium- and long term. However, this was never put into practice, and a lot of homeless people are still living in guesthouses.</p>

	Whilst social workers are generally well-qualified, the ratio of staff to service users is often too high. The national strategy set a target of 15–20 service users per case manager. Currently, the reality is more like 30–40, and more in some cases.	
Remarks on Research	<p>One of the major objectives of the strategy has been to make policy more evidence-based. A series of studies commissioned and coordinated by the Social Security Institute (2004, 2005, 2009) provided a good basic diagnosis of the current situation, but they do not capture the full reality, and homeless service providers consider that the homeless population is larger than these studies indicate.</p> <p>Several research centres and universities have produced research relevant to homelessness.</p>	
Remarks on Budget Evolution	At the time of its public presentation, a budget of €75 million was announced for the Portuguese homelessness strategy. However, this budget has not been allocated.	
Remarks on Key Policy Developments	Positive	Negative
	<p>The introduction of the strategy has been an important step towards ending homelessness, even though progress on implementation is not currently being made.</p> <p>However in certain local areas such Oporto, Coimbra, and Lisbon, civil society organisations remain mobilised around the strategy to find better ways to tackle homelessness.</p>	<p>The social policy has been relegated to the background, with the measures imposed by the troika. Cuts and decreases in the social support, like the RSI level or unemployment benefit.</p> <p>Other social help has been reduced in the several subsystems of the social security, including support for mothers.</p> <p>An increase in the poverty rate to 18.7% in 2013, and unemployment to 17.8%.</p> <p>There are now higher taxes on working people and access to public hospital services is also taxed at an increased rate.</p> <p>The housing policies did not see improvements with the introduction of the rental law, which reduces eviction processes to three months.</p>