European Observatory on Homelessness

European Journal of Homelessness

Volume 13, No. 2 _ 2019

European Observatory on Homelessness

EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF HOMELESSNESS

Journal Philosophy

The European Journal of Homelessness provides a critical analysis of policy and practice on homelessness in Europe for policy makers, practitioners, researchers and academics. The aim is to stimulate debate on homelessness and housing exclusion at the European level and to facilitate the development of a stronger evidential base for policy development and innovation. The journal seeks to give international exposure to significant national, regional and local developments and to provide a forum for comparative analysis of policy and practice in preventing and tackling homelessness in Europe. The journal will also assess the lessons for Europe, which can be derived from policy, practice and research from elsewhere.

Contributors

Isobel Anderson
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Stirling, Scotland, UK.
isobel.anderson@stir.ac.uk

Volker Busch-Geertsema
GISS, Bremen
Germany
volker@busch-geertsema.eu

Tom Byrne
Boston University,
Boston, USA
tbyrne@bu.edu

Daniel Cid,
Winchester School of Art
University of Southampton, UK
d.cid-moragas@soton.ac.uk

Susana Batle Cladera
GRECS – Grup de Recerca sobre Exclusio i Control Socials
Barcelona, Spain
sanbatle@gmail.com

Niall Crowley
Values Lab, Dublin, Ireland
info@values-lab.ie

Joe Doherty
University of St Andrews
Scotland
jd@st-andrews.ac.uk

Marta Llobet Estany
GRECS – Grup de Recerca sobre Exclusio i Control Socials
Barcelona, Spain
mllobet@ub.edu

Jezabel Cartoixà Garcia
GRECS – Grup de Recerca sobre Exclusio i Control Socials
Barcelona, Spain
astigarrabia@gmail.com

Masa Filipovic Hrast
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
masa.filipovic@fdv.uni-lj.si

Panagiota Fitsiou
Society of Social Psychiatry and Mental Health
Athens, Greece
pfitsiou@gmail.com

Nikos Kourachanis
Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences
Athens, Greece
n.kourachanis@gmail.com

Sally Mann
University of Greenwich
London, UK
S.E.Mann@greenwich.ac.uk

Rachel Mullen
Values Lab, Dublin, Ireland
info@values-lab.ie

Cameron Parsell
The University of Queensland
St Lucia, Queensland, Australia
c.parsell@uq.edu.au

Francesc Pla
Leve Projects
Barcelona, Spain
francesc@levenet.com

Nan Roman
National Alliance to End Homelessness
Washington DC, USA
NRoman@NAEH.org

Eva Serrats
Leve Projects
Barcelona, Spain
eva.serrats@levenet.com

Zsolt Temesvary
University of Applied Sciences and Arts
Northwestern Switzerland
zsolt.temesvary@fhnw.ch

Joan Uribe Vilarrodona
University of Barcelona, Spain
joan.uribe@ub.edu

Content

Editorial 9

Articles

Cameron Parsell
Growing Wealth, Increasing Homelessness, and More Opportunities to Exercise Our Care to the Homeless 13

Zsolt Temesvary
Hungarian Homeless People in Basel: Homelessness and Social Exclusion from a Lifeworld-oriented Social Work Perspective 27

Susana Batle Cladera, Jezabel Cartoixà Garcia, Marta Llobet Estany and Joan Uribe Vilarrodona
Ethical Relation and Control: Exploring Limits in the Domestic Sphere of Home 51

Think Pieces

Daniel Cid, Francesc Pla and Eva Serrats
Zero Flat: The Design of a New Type of Apartment for Chronically Homeless People 75

Volker Busch-Geertsema
A Shelter is a Shelter is a Shelter – Response to “Zero Flat. The Design of a New Type of Apartment for Chronically Homeless People” 93

Niall Crowley and Rachel Mullen
Framing the Right to Housing: A Values-Led Approach 95

Policy Reviews

Maša Filipovič Hrast
Challenges to Development of Policy on Homelessness in Slovenia 111

Isobel Anderson
Delivering the Right to Housing? Why Scotland Still Needs
an 'Ending Homelessness' Action Plan 131

Research Notes

Panagiota Fitsiou and Nikos Kourachanis
Social Policy Challenges for Homeless People with Mental Illness:
Views of Greek Mental Health Professionals 163

Sally Mann
Conducting a Walking Interview to Explore Pathways
Out of Persistent and Recurrent Homelessness 179

Book Reviews

National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (2018)
Permanent Supportive Housing: Evaluating the Evidence for Improving
Health Outcomes among People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness. 197

Heather Larkin, Amanda Aykanian and Calvin L. Streeter Eds. (2019)
Homelessness Prevention and Intervention in Social Work:
Policies, Programs and Practices 201

Y-Foundation (2019)
Homelessness in 2030: Essays on Possible Futures 205

Editorial

As the end of this decade, we are confronted with the paradox that we have an increasingly sophisticated evidence base on what works to end homelessness, with the provision of affordable housing central to policy responses. Enhanced inter-agency collaboration with health and allied services is important, particularly for those experiencing long-term entrenched homelessness, but for the majority of households who will experience homelessness across the European Union in 2020, the provision of affordable housing at scale can prevent households experiencing homelessness in the first instance, and facilitate rapid exits for those households placed in temporary and emergency accommodation, including those experiencing literal homelessness.

Yet, as Cameron Parsell highlights in his contribution to this edition of the Journal, a notable feature of responding to homelessness in recent years is the range of charitable initiatives providing various subsistence type services to those experiencing literal homelessness; responses to individual experiences of homelessness, that he argues that are counterproductive to efforts to achieve housing justice as they simply that soothe the consequences, rather than address the underlying causes. Furthermore, Niall Crowley and Rachel Mullen in their think piece argue that individualising homelessness and housing insecurity leads to debates about who is 'deserving' and 'undeserving' among those experiencing, or at risk of homelessness.

One country that has achieved housing justice for those experiencing homelessness is the increasingly well-known example of Finland, demonstrating that it is possible to achieve an effective functional zero in terms of those experiencing homelessness, and indeed, their ambition is to achieve an absolute zero by 2027. Another jurisdiction that aims to end homelessness is Scotland, and in 2018 an ambitious plan, based on robust research evidence was published that aims to end homelessness by 2023. As detailed by Isobel Anderson in her contribution, the aim is to ensure that no one is sleeping rough; no one forced to live in transient or dangerous accommodation such as tents, squats and non-residential buildings and no one living in emergency accommodation such as shelters and hostels without a plan for rapid rehousing into affordable, secure and decent accommodation. This is an important policy initiative, and the Journal will provide an annual update on the progress being made in achieving the 2023 target.

We also initiated a new section where aim to provide detailed reviews of homelessness policy in countries where there is an emerging research and policy literature, with the aim of providing our readers with a synopsis of trends and issues. In this edition, Maša Filipovič Hrast explores homelessness in Slovenia, outlining some of the determinants of the slow development of policies addressing homelessness. The context of Slovenia's housing market is portrayed as a particularly important determinant with high homeownership rates and poor development of the rental housing stock.

This edition also contains contributions on long-standing issues of interest to the readers of the Journal, such as migration and homelessness in the contribution by Zsolt Temesvery; mental health and homelessness in the contribution by Panagiota Fitsiou and Nikos Kourachanis, and different forms of housing and support for those experiencing chronic homelessness in the contribution by Daniel Cid and colleagues, with a response by Volker Busch-Geertsema. A number of book reviews concludes this edition of the Journal.

We hope that you find this edition of the Journal stimulating and informative, and look forward to further contributing to developing the evidence base for ending homelessness in Europe.

Articles

Part A

Growing Wealth, Increasing Homelessness, and More Opportunities to Exercise Our Care to the Homeless

Cameron Parsell

School of Social Science, The University of Queensland, St Lucia, Queensland, Australia

Abstract_ *This article examines the paradox of increasing homelessness in Australia during an epoch of continued economic growth and unprecedented individual wealth. Official government statistics show a consistent trend in homelessness rising at a rate higher than population growth. Increasing homelessness takes place alongside increasing government funding for specialist homelessness services, and reduced government funding for social housing. Australia responds to the growing problem of homelessness, especially rough sleeping, with myriad ground up charitable initiatives that soothe the consequences rather than address the underlying causes. The article argues that these charitable responses to homelessness represent opportunities for the giver to exercise their compassion and care toward the homeless. The article shows that Australians design, celebrate and volunteer with responses to homelessness that are counterproductive to efforts to achieve housing justice. The charitable initiatives are embedded within policy failures that drive homelessness, and enabled through direct government funding, taxation policy and the uncritical public acclaim that charity to the homeless enjoys.*

Keywords_ *Charity, poverty of ambition, policy failure, ending homelessness*

ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online

Introduction

Drawing on the recent Australian experience, this article examines the paradox of the rate of homelessness increasing alongside increasing wealth and economic prosperity. In light of Australia's significant wealth, the article scrutinises some of the strategies adopted to respond to, but not to end, the growing problem. Homelessness in Australia has increased over the past 15 years. The official homelessness numbers, based on the Australian Bureau of Statistic's estimates from five yearly Census, demonstrate a consistent rising trend. Between the 2006 and 2011 Census, the number of people estimated to be homeless on Census night rose 14 per cent from 89 728 to 102 439. Similarly, the 116 427 people estimated as homeless on the 2016 Census night constitute a 14 per cent increase on the 102 439 people estimated as homeless at the 2011 Census (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018).

The increasing rate of homelessness in Australia is greater than population growth. The Australian Homelessness Monitor from Hal Pawson and colleagues observed that the 14 per cent growth in homelessness between 2011 and 2016 is five per cent greater than the nine per cent growth in Australia's population during the period. Moreover, they found that the growth in homelessness is not evenly distributed across Australia. Rather, homelessness grew disproportionately high in some of Australia's major cities, such as Sydney, where both the economy and housing market experienced significant growth (Pawson *et al.*, 2018).

The uneven distribution of homelessness across Australia can be gleaned from the data on the rate of people who are homeless per 10 000 of the population by Australia's six states and two territories. Although the 2016 Census showed the national rate of homelessness to be 50 persons per 10 000 of the population – with Australia's three most populous States, New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland ranging from 42 to 50 persons per 10 000 of the population – we can see in Australia's Northern Territory the rate of people who are homeless is 600 per 10 000 of the population (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018).

The Northern Territory thus, has a rate of homelessness that is twelve times greater than the national rate. Institutional racism in Australia drives and explains the phenomenally high rate of homelessness in the Northern Territory. Whereas Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people constitute 2.8 per cent of the Australian population, they constitute 26 per cent of the Northern Territory population (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Further, of the 13 717 people who were counted as homeless in the Northern Territory from the 2016 Census, 12 131, or 88 per cent, were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018).

Official counts of homelessness nationally demonstrate an upward trend in the rate of homelessness during an epoch of economic success. It is the upward trends in homelessness, counterintuitively, that spurred newly appointed Federal Assistant Housing Minister Luke Howarth, to ask Australians to be positive about the homelessness rate. In 2019 the Assistant Minister rationalised the positive spin on growing homelessness in Australia because "it affects a very, very small percentage of the population" (Belot, 2019).

It is difficult to discern the positives from the upward trends in homelessness. Australia's first two decades of the Twenty First Century have been dominated by economic abundance. Australia has achieved recession free uninterrupted economic growth for the 28 years between 1992 and 2019, which the Australian Government proudly proclaims is "a new record among developed economies for uninterrupted expansion" (Australian Trade and Investment Commission, 2019, p.3). Acknowledging that official unemployment rates can conceal underemployment and underutilisation (Mitchell and Carlson, 2000), Australia's unemployment rate depicts a similarly positive macroeconomic story. The 2018 unemployment rate of 5.3 per cent is equivalent to the OECD mean, and lower than the 6.8 per cent recorded in the European Union (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2018).

Australia's macroeconomic conditions are reflected in individual wealth. The 2018 Global Wealth Report concluded that "Australia's wealth per adult in 2018 was the second-highest in the world after Switzerland", and if median wealth is considered, Australia's individual wealth is ahead of Switzerland as the highest in the world (Credit Suisse 2018, p. 55). It is this paradox of Australia's affluence and growing prosperity hand-in-hand with growing homelessness that this article engages.

Examination of this paradox is particularly pressing given that Australia, like other countries with advanced welfare states, not only has the financial means to address homelessness, but also the technical knowledge to do so. A developed body of empirical research demonstrates what is required to prevent and end homelessness (Mackie, 2015; O'Sullivan, 2016; Padgett *et al*., 2016). Fundamental to the evidence base is the availability and accessibility of affordable and secure housing as central to solving homelessness. Although housing's centrality may seem intuitive, later we demonstrate the significant money and effort that is dedicated to homelessness responses that do not include housing. Alongside the necessity of housing as core to the solution of homelessness, the research shows how practices, integration, legislation, and purposeful models of intervention successfully prevent and end homelessness (Watts, 2014; Mackie, Johnsen and Wood, 2017; Parsell, Clarke and Vorsina, 2019).

We can therefore add to the paradox a rigorous evidence about what is required to end homelessness. Against the backdrop of the knowledge that exists to end homelessness – indeed, often knowledge generated through government funded evaluative research – together with Australia's positive economic circumstances, this article asks two questions. First, what are some of the strategies employed in Australia to respond to increasing homelessness, especially rough sleeping? Second, how can we understand Australia's responses to homelessness?

The article argues that many Australians are deeply sympathetic to people who are homeless, and this sympathy is embodied through pity for *the homeless*. From their pitied position, Australians respond to people experiencing homelessness through initiatives that enable the giver to exercise their compassion and care toward the homeless. The article shows that Australians design, celebrate and volunteer with responses to homelessness that are counterproductive to efforts to achieve housing justice.

Australia's Former Policy Ambition to End Homelessness

The paradox of increasing homelessness in Australia alongside economic prosperity is not a consequence of a lack of policy ambition. From 2008, Australian Commonwealth, state and territory governments committed to a new policy agenda that set ambitious objectives to permanently end homelessness. Through the setting of measurable targets, Australian policy committed to half the homeless population by 2020 and to offer supported accommodation to all rough sleepers who need it by 2020 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008).

Australia's formal homelessness policy released in 2008 understood the central role that a lack of affordable housing played in causing homelessness, and in turn, explicitly identified the need for additional affordable housing stock as central to achieve the homelessness reduction objectives. Through the formal policy and subsequent measures to stimulate the economy, in the wake of 2008 Australia had paused the disinvestment in social housing and had funded and delivered 20 000 new social housing dwellings across the country (Herault and Johnson, 2016).

The new homeless policy agenda in Australia, with clear recognition of the structural drivers of homelessness, constituted a positive progression. In the years prior to 2008, Australian homelessness and broader welfare policy had constructed people experiencing homelessness as deviant, dependent and responsible for their deprivation (Bullen, 2015). Rather than the provision of affordable housing, Bullen (2015) showed that homelessness policy prior to the new agenda of 2008 individu-

alised the problem. From the prevailing focus on the individual experiencing homelessness, policy was predominantly a means to fund case management as a strategy to enable people to achieve self-reliance.

Australia's 2008 policy to achieve measurable and permanent reductions in homelessness, with the understanding that affordable housing, prevention, and improving the service system was needed, constituted an optimistic era in Australian society. Parsell and Jones (2014) lauded the formal policy as embedded within a deep understanding of the multidimensional causes of homelessness with a firm recognition of the state's role in addressing the structural barriers that people experience exiting homelessness. Indeed, although the government couched Australia's 2008 policy vision to address homelessness by evoking Australia's egalitarian identity, the formal plans to address homelessness relied upon rigorous research evidence. Herault and Johnson (2016, p. 130) observe that evidence based policy became the mantra to address homelessness, with "research evidence positioned in policy discourse as a key link between reducing homelessness and the selection of new homelessness initiatives."

Despite the optimism about the progressive policy that aimed to disrupt the structural inequities that caused homelessness, the subsequent implementation of much of the policy did not meet the evidence based policy ideals. Parsell, Jones and Head (2013), for example, found that street to home initiatives adopted in Australia based on international evidence failed to include clear mechanisms for access to housing. Although the policies adopted had a rigorous evidence base from the United States, the policy transfer to Australia was incomplete, and thus the capacity of street to home to achieve the successes from elsewhere were limited accordingly. Likewise, the advocacy and funding of other Australian homelessness policy was driven by intuition and personal experience rather than research evidence (Parsell, Fitzpatrick and Busch-Geertsema, 2014). Herault and Johnson (2016) observe that Australia's opportunity for service reform was wasted.

From 2008, governments in Australia implemented a rightly ambitious policy agenda, albeit with limitations derived from implementation challenges. The limitations notwithstanding, it must be acknowledged that many programmes funded through the policy agenda did achieve the significant outcome of enabling people to overcome barriers to housing access they had experienced prior to 2008 (Johnson and Chamberlain, 2015; Parsell, Petersen and Culhane, 2016). As Parkinson and Parsell (2018) observe, Australia has achieved important successes in adopting one-off projects and initiatives to end homelessness for people lucky enough to access the projects or initiatives. The successes of the models, however, have not been institutionalised within the system to address the housing and support system failures.

Beyond the limitations observed with homelessness policy not sufficiently addressing structural problems or other limitations driven by implementation problems, are the myriad and seemingly endless array of ground-up homelessness initiatives for *the homeless*. As demonstrated below, during the same period that governments announced unprecedented policy commitments to end homelessness through abundant economic times, Australia has also implemented a range of initiatives that do not include housing or housing outcome aspirations.

To Be With, But Not to End, Homelessness

Australians are deeply engaged in designing initiatives directed toward being with people who are homeless, but without ambition or activity to end their homelessness. In this journal a few years ago, we wrote about the charity movement in Australia that travelled the streets to wash the clothes of, and to provide mobile shower for, people who were homeless (Parsell and Watts, 2017). In the article, and drawing on Peter Singer's effective altruism, we argued that "careful and sustained attention needs to be given to whether the positive intentions of the giver achieve positive impacts for the receiver" (Parsell and Watts, 2017, p.66). We presented the argument that the good intentions of those who are interested in working with people who are homeless need to be set to one side, and instead empirical evidence should be used to assess the outcomes homelessness interventions achieve, especially housing outcomes.

Our analysis of mobile laundries and mobile showers as a response to homelessness raised concern about how these seemingly well intentioned initiatives distract from the underlying causes of homelessness as well as plans to end homelessness. Indeed, we argued that the celebration of these widely acclaimed initiatives for *the homeless* run the risk of normalising homelessness as a social fact (Parsell and Watts, 2017).

Despite the growing knowledge that has been generated about how evidence informed and housing led initiatives can permanently end rough sleeping and chronic homelessness, ground up and voluntary responses to people who are homeless are continually adopted in Australia. Consistent with the mobile laundry and mobile shower endeavours, the newly emerging ground up initiatives do not involve housing or have any aspiration or plan to contribute toward a housing outcome.

During late 2019 in Brisbane, Australia's third most populous city, the charity Beddown launched a two week trial to enable people who sleep rough to sleep in car parks on inflatable mattresses. The creator of Beddown said that, subject to the trial, he hoped to roll out the car park sleeping initiative to Melbourne and Sydney, Australia's two most populous cities (Silva, 2019). The promoters of the sleeping in car parks initiative say that they have been overwhelmed with support,

for example, from other charities providing mobile washing vans, volunteer hairdressers, and free food (Silva, 2019). The Beddown website asserts that the pop up accommodation aims to "help restore health, dignity, and respect for our guests" (Beddown, 2019).

Sleepbus is another Australian charity, which commenced in 2016. After what the website says was a "year of research and development", the charity fitted out busses with beds so that people who are homeless can sleep in a bus. The website explains that each sleepbus has "up to 20 secure, climate controlled, individual sleep pods in twin cabins" (Sleepbus, n.d.) A bus pictured on the website has writing on the side that states "this bus provided 8030 safe sleeps per year" (Sleepbus n.d.). Admittedly less prestigious than the Young Australians of the year award that the two creators of the mobile laundry charity received, the creator of Sleepbus won a 2017 Business Award for Victorian Charity of the year. A mainstream media outlet report lauded Sleepbus "as part of the solution to Australia's growing homeless problem" (McNally, 2016). Moreover, citing the wide public support Sleepbus had received through financial donations, the media uncritically reported Sleepbus as "quite cost effective" (McNally, 2016).

Citing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the right to dignity, shelter and health, the Australian charity Backpack Beds provides people who are homeless with backpacks that convert to beds. The website says that they supply approximately 5000 backpack beds in Australia each year, and that demand outstrips supply (Backpack Beds, 2019). Again, the charity initiative is highly acclaimed; in 2011 Backpack Bed received the Australian Human Rights Award for Best Community Organisation (Backpack Beds, 2019).

Returning to the first research question motivating this article, we can see that Australians employ myriad responses to people who are homeless that aim to meet a minimal resource deprivation. The charitable initiatives above share similar premises. They aim to provide a basic human need that people who are homeless, especially those sleeping rough, have a constrained capacity to meet. In the absence of the amenity enabled through housing, people sleeping rough cannot readily wash their clothes or themselves, thus outreach transport brings this amenity to them. The basic amenity provided does not extend to housing, but rather some of the resources that are contained within housing are provided, such as beds or canvass material in a backpack that can be used as a bed, washing machines and showers. There is an intuitive appeal to these charitable approaches: by virtue of being homeless people do not have access to beds and washing facilities; this is observable to an onlooker, and this confronting observation motivates volunteers to address the resource deprivation. Reflecting on these responses, the remainder of the article addresses the second research question: how can we understand

Australia's responses to homelessness? We pay particular attention to examining and understanding these responses to homelessness in light of the abundance inherent in the paradox introduced at the beginning of the article.

Poverty of Ambition

We can tease out the nature and practices of the ground up charitable endeavours, as evidenced in the four examples above, to identify the implicit assumptions about people who are homeless. It is reasonable to assume that these charitable endeavours are driven by people's feeling of compassion for homeless people. Drawing on classical definitions of compassion developed by Aristotle and extended by Nussbaum, Crisp (2008) sets out compassion as a feeling rather than an action. We feel compassion out of the concern at others' suffering. Moreover, Nussbaum (1996) is optimistic about compassion, arguing that compassion can be a bridge between the individual and community.

The compassion people feel, for the downtrodden, for example, does not predict how they will act on their compassion. Even though compassion may help people move from "self-interest to just conduct" (Nussbaum, 1996, p. 57), compassion can motivate wrong action, including responding to the suffering of others' for self-interest (Crisp, 2008). Compassion is a useful feeling to induce concern about injustices other people experience, but it is an unreliable feeling to motivate action to most appropriately help people who are suffering (Crisp, 2008). Psychological research on giving, for instance, suggests that when people are pitied, and when their pitiful situation is deemed to be undeserving, people are more likely to donate to charities that address their situation (Dijker, 2001).

The existing knowledge on feeling compassion and pity as a means to donate do not provide clear insights into why the Australian public so widely supports the charitable ground up initiatives for homeless people, instead of supporting affordable housing initiatives, for instance. Dees (2012) identified a tension between science and charity that is pertinent to the current discussion: the tension between relieving suffering versus solving problems.

Rather than working to address the structural undersupply of affordable housing, people's compassion motivates them to respond to another's immediate suffering. Moreover, responding to immediate need, rather than preventing a social problem from occurring in the first place, is deemed more socially praiseworthy. It is for these reasons that Crisp (2008) advocates for rational consideration as more important in motivating right action to alleviate suffering rather than compassion. Dees (2012, p. 326) explains:

> From a rational point of view, prevention deserves even more moral praise than helping one victim, but in the culture of charity, it is the immediate act of caritas that is most praiseworthy. This morality encourages people to direct action and resources to visible suffering rather than underlying problems… Caritas responds to names and faces, not counterfactual statistics.

The four examples noted above – mobile laundries and washing machines, beds in car parks, beds in buses, and beds in backpacks – all received significant social praise. They also received noteworthy acclaim, including positive media coverage and esteemed national awards, Young Australians of the Year and an award from the prestigious Australian Human Rights Commission. I know of no prestigious awards bestowed or glowing media coverage to individuals or organisations that have prevented or ended homelessness in Australia through increasing the supply of housing or changing tenancy legislation, for example.

Paul Bloom offers an explanation for why we celebrate direct actions to soothe poverty and tend to downplay fundamental structural change that solves problems. Bloom (2016) argues that our moral decisions are shaped by empathy: what we see in front of us influences not only what we focus on, but also the type of behaviour we adopt. When we see someone who is homeless we are motivated to respond to their immediate need for a shower or a bed in a car park for instance, rather than reasoning about what we can do to address the underlying problems that affect the many thousands of people [who are homeless, for example] that we cannot see. For Bloom (2016), empathy can lead people to do good things, but compared to rational assessment of evidence and the consequences of our actions, empathic responses about what problems we focus on and how we respond can drive behaviour that makes things worse.

It is the uncritical praise and celebration of activities that engage with the poor and relieve their suffering that offers some explanation to why these initiatives continue to grow despite economic conditions that unambiguously allow for resources to be allocated toward solving the problem of homelessness through housing. Indeed, Australian robust empirical research does demonstrate the cost offsets of ending rather than managing homelessness (Parsell, Petersen and Culhane, 2016); the research, moreover, which was funded by the state housing department, sits on shelves while the same housing department directly funds initiatives that soothe rather than end homelessness. Through a funding scheme that I am assured is not intended to be ironically named, Dignity First funding from an Australian government's housing department has provided more than a million dollars to charities to purchase and operate mobile facilities to provide cleaning, food, and hairdressing to *the homeless* on the street (Queensland Government, 2019).

Direct state funding for these charitable endeavours that soothe the symptoms of poverty are easy to challenge. When we have evidence that housing is the critical element required to end a person's homelessness, there is a direct link to the state's constrained capacity to deliver on housing solutions when the state department of housing instead funds mobile laundry, shower, and hairdressing facilities for people living on the street. Also worth critique, however, is the philanthropic and individual funding provided to support these charitable initiatives. When uncritically praising these soothing initiatives, the media point to the public support and public funding provided (McNally, 2016). Reich (2018) reminds us, however, that these acts of individual donation are not decoupled from our collective responsibility and collective actions. In countries such as Australia and many others, an individual donating money to a charity offsets an individual's taxable income, and thus the amount of tax a citizen is obligated to pay the state. Individual and collective charity must therefore be understood as firmly "embedded in political institutions, laws, and public policies" (Reich 2018, p.26).

It is perhaps no coincidence that government funding for charities that soothe the consequences of homelessness coincide with increased funding for homelessness services, including temporary homeless accommodation, and reduced funding for housing. Between the financial years 2012-13 to 2016-17, Australia has increased funding for specialist homelessness services by 29 per cent, and during the same period, reduced spending on social housing by 8 per cent (Pawson *et al.*, 2018). Diminishing government funding to social housing goes hand in hand with increased funding to homelessness providers. However, with declining levels of social housing, the homelessness service providers with increasing budgets have a constrained capacity to assist people access housing.

Government figures illustrate the consequences of reduced funding for social housing poignantly. Data on people accessing specialist homelessness services published by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2019a) show that "long-term housing options were provided to 5% (or 5200) of the 104600 (36%) clients needing this service." The state reduces funding for social housing, increases funding for specialist homelessness services, and then because social housing is in such short supply, the specialist homelessness services with additional funding are unable to support their clients to access social housing (because funding for social housing had decreased). The heavily residualised social housing sector in Australia has meant that housing providers have restricted access to people who can demonstrate they cannot access housing in the market. Despite the strict criteria for eligibility, there are 140600 Australians registered waiting for social housing (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019b).

Without sufficient social housing, specialist homelessness services have a constrained capacity to contribute to housing outcomes, which is manifest in both the specialist homelessness service data use and increasing prevalence of homelessness counts identified in the Census. These policy and funding decisions create a fertile environment for ground up initiatives to respond to the consequences of policy failure. As Reich (2018, p. 9) observes, "growing inequality might be a foe to civic comity, but it is a friend to private philanthropy." Again, we have to see the ground up charitable initiatives as embedded within wider policy and structural levers.

The structural drivers of the undersupply of social and affordable housing create the conditions for people to experience homelessness, which evokes ground up initiatives that endeavour to soothe some of the consequences. Structural forces similarly support the growth of the charitable endeavours, through taxation policy for example, and the overwhelming social support these charitable endeavours receive, solidifies their perceived legitimacy as a mainstream response to homelessness. There is a vast and long established body of knowledge on the myriad detrimental impacts to the recipient of charity that is unable to reciprocate but rather reliant on the benevolence and moral authority of the giver (Mauss, 2011). Dees adds to these individual dynamics by pointing out how charitable responses to poverty have systematic consequences. He says charity:

> Is a complicated thing to do well. It can backfire in several ways, causing more harm than good. It has inherently perverse incentives of keeping the problems it addresses alive so that future generations can continue to exercise this virtue. This can lead to a ''charity industry'' that has a vested interest in problems remaining unsolved (Dees 2012, p. 327)

Building on the negative consequences identified in the charity literature, the charitable endeavours examined in this article embed the homeless' dependence on volunteers, on the one hand, and reify their positioning as in need of the care of the charitable, on the other (Parsell, 2018). By diverting funding from housing and distracting from attention to end homelessness, these initiatives form part of a charity industry that is neither motivated by nor directed toward solving homelessness. Moreover, by lining up at car parks to access stretcher beds, or in public spaces to have a volunteer wash one's clothes, or to enter a mobile shower attached to a van, the public continue to see people who are homeless as the other. We have argued that these charitable endeavours are predicated on a poverty of ambition (Parsell and Watts, 2017). By withholding housing and requiring *the homeless* to become reliant on these charitable measures, the necessity for these impoverished endeavours become validated.

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017) *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population 2016* https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20Features~Aboriginal%20and%20Torres%20Strait%20islander%20Population%20Article~12

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) *Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness, 2016* https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/2049.0

Australian Institute for Health and Welfare (2019a) *Specialist Homelessness Services Annual Report 2017-18* https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-2017-18/contents/unmet-demand-for-specialist-homelessness-services

Australian Institute for Health and Welfare (2019b) *Housing Assistance in Australia 2019* https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/housing-assistance/housing-assistance-in-australia-2019/contents/priority-groups-and-wait-lists#pg4

Australian Trade and Investment Commission (2019) *Why Australia: Benchmark Report 2019* (Canberra: Australian Government).

Backpack Beds (2019) https://backpackbed.org/au/

Beddown (2019) *What is Beddown all About?* https://beddown.org.au/what-we-do/

Belot, H. (2019) Minister for housing Luke Howarth wants a 'positive spin' on homelessness, *ABC News* https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-07-09/howarth-homelessness-positive-spin/11291046

Bloom, P. (2016) *Against Empathy: The Case for Rational Compassion* (London: The Bodley Head).

Bullen, J. (2015) Governing Homelessness: The Discursive and Institutional Construction of Homelessness in Australia, *Housing, Theory and Society* 32(2) pp.218-239.

Commonwealth of Australia (2008) *The Road Home: A National Approach to Reducing Homelessness* https://www.abc.net.au/cm/lb/4895838/data/the-road-home---a-national-approach-to-reducing-homelessness-data.pdf

Credit Suisse (2018) *Global Wealth Report* (Zurich: Research Institute).

Crisp, R. (2008) Compassion and Beyond, *Ethical Theory and Practice* 11(3) pp.223-246.

Dees, G. (2012) A Tale of Two Cultures: Charity, Problem Solving, and the Future of Social Entrepreneurship, *Journal of Business Ethics* 111(3) pp.321-334.

Dijker, A. (2001) The Influence of Perceived Suffering and Vulnerability on the Experience of Pity, *European Journal of Social Psychology* 31(6) pp.659-676.

Herault, N. and Johnson, G. (2016) Homelessness in Australia: Service Reform and Research in the 21st Century, *European Journal of Homelessness* 13(3) pp.127-144.

Johnson, G. and Chamberlain, C. (2015) *Evaluation of the Melbourne Street to Home Program: Final Report* https://www.launchhousing.org.au/site/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ms2h-final-rpt-4-publication-20150318.pdf

Mackie, P. (2015) Homelessness Prevention and the Welsh Legal Duty: Lessons for International Policies, *Housing Studies* 30(1) pp.40-59.

Mackie, P., Johnsen, S. and Wood, J. (2017) *Ending Rough Sleeping: What Works?* (London: Crisis).

Mauss, M. (2011) *The Gift: Forms and Function of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (Mansfield: Martino Publishing).

McNally, G. (2016) People power raises $95k to convert buses into mobile shelters for the homeless and their pets, *The Daily Telegraph* https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/sleepbus-aims-to-put-a-fleet-of-mobile-sleeping-pods-on-the-road-for-the-homeless/news-story/fb67221475bc48d31925928ce7ea5bdb

Mitchell, W. and Carlson, E. (2000) *Beyond the Unemployment Rate – Labour Underutilisation and Underemployment in Australia and the USA* (Callaghan: Centre of Full Employment and Equity).

Nussbaum, M. (1996) Compassion: The Basic Social Emotion, *Social Philosophy and Emotion* 13(1) pp. 27-58.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2018) *Unemployment Rate* https://data.oecd.org/unemp/unemployment-rate.htm

O'Sullivan, E. (2016) Ending Homelessness in Ireland: Ambition, Adversity, and Adaptation? *European Journal of Homelessness* 10(2) pp.11-39.

Padgett, D., Henwood, B. and Tsemberis, S. (2016) *Housing First: Ending Homelessness, Transforming Systems, and Changing Lives* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Parkinson, S. and Parsell, C. (2018) Housing First and the Reassembling of Permanent Supportive Housing: The Limits and Opportunities of Private Rental, *Housing, Theory and Society* 35(1) pp. 36-56.

Parsell, C. (2018) *The Homeless Person in Contemporary Society* (Abingdon: Routledge).

Parsell, C., Clarke, A. and Vorsina, M. (2019) Evidence for an Integrated Healthcare and Psychosocial Multidisciplinary Model to Address Rough Sleeping, *Health and Social Care in the Community* https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/hsc.12835

Parsell, C., Fitzpatrick, S. and Busch-Geertsema, V. (2014) Common Ground in Australia: An Object Lesson in Evidence Hierarchies and Policy Transfer, *Housing Studies* 29(1) pp.69-87.

Parsell, C. and Jones, A. (2014) Bold Reform or Policy Overreach? Australia's Attack on Homelessness, *International Journal of Housing Policy* 14(4) pp.427-443.

Parsell, C., Jones A. and Head, B. (2013) Policies and Programmes to End Homelessness in Australia: Learning from International Practices, *International Journal of Social Welfare* 22(2) pp.186-194.

Parsell, C., Petersen, M., and Culhane, D. (2016) Cost Offsets of Supportive Housing: Evidence for Social Work, *The British Journal of Social Work* 47(5) pp.1534-1553.

Parsell, C. and Watts, B. (2017) Charity and Justice: A Reflection on New Forms of Homelessness Provision in Australia, *European Journal of Homelessness* 11(2) pp.65-76.

Pawson, H., Parsell, C., Saunders, P., Hill, T. and Liu, E. (2018) *The Australian Homelessness Monitor* (Melbourne: Launch Housing).

Queensland Government (2019) *Dignity First Fund* https://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/Housing/PartnershipInitiatives/DignityFirstFund/Pages/default.aspx

Reich, R. (2018) *Just Giving: Why Philanthropy is Failing Democracy and How it Can do Better* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

Silva, A. (2019) Car parks transformed into pop-up accommodation for homeless people, *Brisbane Times* https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/national/queensland/car-parks-transformed-into-pop-up-accommodation-for-homeless-people-20190927-p52vgt.html

Sleepbus. (n.d) https://www.sleepbus.org/

Watts, B. (2014) Homelessness, Empowerment and Self-reliance in Scotland and Ireland: The Impact of Legal Rights to Housing for Homeless People, *Journal of Social Policy* 43(4) pp.793-810.

Hungarian Homeless People in Basel: Homelessness and Social Exclusion from a Lifeworld-oriented Social Work Perspective

Zsolt Temesvary

University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland

Abstract_ *Although their exact number is unknown, supposedly dozens of destitute Hungarian homeless people currently live in Basel, Switzerland. Despite their vulnerability and severe social needs, social workers and other experts know little about their living conditions. This paper aims to explore the dimensions of time and space as well as the characteristics of personal and institutional relationships of Hungarian homeless people living in Basel. The study applies Hans Thiersch's lifeworld-oriented perspective on social work that contributes to the better understanding of the affected homeless peoples` daily struggles. The study is based on semi-structured qualitative interviews carried out with both homeless people and social workers in the institutions of homeless care. The paper concludes that due to the 'protectionist' mechanisms of Swiss social policy, unregistered Hungarian homeless people are excluded from most cantonal social and health services. However, their daily routine is strictly structured by the opening hours of the low-threshold services and their human relationships are limited to other homeless people as well as social workers at soup kitchens and day-care services.*

Keywords_ *Homelessness, Hungary, Switzerland, Basel*

ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online

Introduction

According to the latest data collection of the *Hungarian Office of Statistics*, there are 19569 Hungarian citizens in Switzerland (Gödri, 2018, p.261), the vast majority of which live in the most economically developed North-western, German-speaking cantons. Switzerland became so popular among emigrating Hungarian citizens that – after Italians – Hungary has the second largest positive migration balance, considering the population of the country (SEM, 2018, p.23). Big Swiss cities like Basel, Zürich or Bern are particularly popular among Hungarians and other EU immigrants because of the thriving industry and good working and living conditions (BFS, 2019).

Basel city is one of the richest cantons of Switzerland based on its GDP (BFS, 2018) and the city's developed economy attracts thousands of migrants every year. According to the data of the Office of Statistics in Canton Basel City (2019), 841 Hungarians lived in Basel in 2018, and the number of Hungarian citizens living in the city is four times as high as it was 20 years ago. Similar to other European countries (see Kováts and Soltész, 2018; Váradi, 2018), the vast majority of immigrating Hungarians are young, multilingual and qualified employees whose migration can be traced back to economic reasons. However, besides the many highly qualified workers, also a lot of destitute, unemployed and homeless people arrive to Basel in order to seek and find better living conditions than they previously had in their home country. The exact number of emigrating homeless people is unknown, as their migration is generally not registered either in Hungary or in Switzerland. According to the 2018 'Basel City Count' (Drilling *et al.*, 2019, p.19) only seven Hungarian citizens lived as homeless in Basel, although their real number may be much higher.[1]

The current study analyses the living conditions of Hungarian homeless people living in Basel. Doing so, Hans Thiersch's lifeworld oriented social work approach (Thiersch, 2014) has been applied for the better understanding of homeless peoples' everyday life, including activities like searching for food, looking for sleeping places as well as their relationships to social institutions and social workers. Lifeworld-oriented social work explores the current living conditions of people and considers professional social work as a method to intervene in the individuals' daily life and change the habitual behavioural patterns if necessary (Kraus, 2015). Lifeworld-oriented social work considers the social, political and economic resources of poor people and attempts to facilitate their interpersonal and institutional networks as natural resources (Thiersch, 2014, p.5). Lifeworld approach is based on the *everyday life* or *experienced reality* of people examining

[1] The Basel City Count was part of the study 'Homelessness, Rooflessness and Precarious Housing in the Basel Region'. The one-time count was conducted in the institutions of homeless care as well as on the street (night count) on March 20-21, 2018.

their daily routine as well as their available social and institutional networks (Thiersch *et al*., 2012). Lifeworld-oriented approach incorporates all habitual activities, emotions, feelings, attitudes and behaviours through which the daily life of people can be illustrated (Sárkány, 2013; Sárkány, 2015).

Böhnisch and Schröer (2012) call this *experienced reality of people,* constructed by institutional and social networks, 'life condition' (*Lebenslage*). According to Amann (1994), the 'life condition' of people is the result of a sophisticated social development and – at the same time – the starting point of the further development of both individuals and groups. Weisser (1978) states that 'life condition' is influenced by various social problems and opportunities, in which change contributes to individual development. To measure peoples' lifeworld, three dimensions must be considered at the same time, namely the role of experienced time, space and social relationships (Thiersch, 2014, p.27). This categorisation of Thiersch was supplemented by Böhnisch and Schröer with the relevance of institutional relationships. This paper follows the structure of *lifeworld* and *life condition* and explores the homelessness of destitute Hungarian people based on the categories above.

The terminology of the paper applies FEANTSA's definition on homelessness. According to FEANTSA's (2017) (an EU-wide NGO dealing with homelessness) ETHOS (European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion) categorisation, not only rough sleepers and other people living in public places can be considered as homeless; the spectrum of people threatened by unsecured and insufficient housing is significantly wider (Schulte-Scherlebeck *et al*., 2015). This paper analyses the living conditions and coping strategies of Hungarian homeless people belonging to the first and second ETHOS categories, namely people living rough or sleeping in emergency accommodations. The reason for this limitation of participants is primarily that rough sleepers and people living in shelters are available in the institutions of homeless care, while people suffering from domestic violence, facing evictions or whose housing is 'only' endangered (ETHOS categories 3-13), often cannot be available through the low threshold homeless services (see Busch-Geertsema *et al*., 2016, Lutz *et al*., 2017). The other reason for the reduction of participants is that the homelessness of rough sleepers and people sleeping at shelters has special characteristics – considering their daily routine, coping strategies and wandering – compared to the other homeless groups (Schulte-Scherlebeck *et al*., 2015).

Methods

The study is based on semi-structured qualitative interviews (Flick, 2014) carried out with homeless people and social workers between September 2018 and February 2019. All interviews were recorded in low-threshold social institutions (like soup kitchens and day-care services) for homeless people in Basel. These services provide shelter, warm food, possibilities for hygiene, and the access to social administration for their clients.

Participants were recruited to the interviews by snowball sampling. This method allows new participants to be found by using the available networks (e.g. the former interviewees) of the study. Snowball sampling is particularly useful when the number of potential participants is rather limited and their availability is difficult (Watson *et al.,* 2016, p.97). During the sampling, homeless people were asked for an interview if they belonged to the first (rough sleeper) or second (shelter-dweller) ETHOS categories, regularly visited the low-threshold services of homeless care and identified themselves as Hungarian. During the six months of data collection, 22 people were identified in Basel as belonging to these categories, however, two participants finally rejected the interview request. The available 20 interviews incorporated 12 semi-structured qualitative client interviews and 8 so-called walking interviews. Walking interviews contributed to the wholeness of the study and provided useful information on homeless persons who were not available for a longer interview because of the limitation of time and place (Kühl, 2016, p.37).

The interviews were carried out and transcribed in Hungarian (interviews with homeless people) and German (interviews with social workers). The transcripts were evaluated by the methodology of systematic qualitative text analysis (Mayring, 2000). The codes were created after transcribing the interviews and were processed and stored (due to the relatively little number of items) in MS Excel format. To protect the participants' identity, all names were changed and the files (charts, transcripts and audio files) were stored on the university's server according to the strictest Swiss data protection regulations.

The data collection raised several ethical issues that demanded special skills and efforts from the researcher. Primarily, I had to overcome the problem of 'multiple mandates' of social work (Payne, 2014; Staub-Bernasconi, 2016) and clarify my position as a Hungarian citizen, a researcher and a social worker. As a fellow Hungarian citizen, many homeless people sought my proximity and tried to befriend me, which was a quite natural reaction of destitute people searching for social relationships. I clarified my position to the responding homeless people, explained the goals of my research and informed all participants that their personal data were stored in a secured way, and that their names were also changed in the study.

Results

In this introduction of the study's main results, the main characteristics of Hungarian homeless people are described first. It is followed by the introduction of time and space as life-structuring factors in the lifeworld of the participants. Finally, the personal and institutional relationships of the responding homeless people are evaluated.

Main characteristics

According to a city count conducted by the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW) on March 20 and 21, 2018, 206 homeless people lived in Basel and half of them were migrants. Among the migrants (104 persons), 32 people came from one of the Central and Eastern European countries, and thus CEE citizens were the largest national group among the homeless people in Basel (Drilling *et al.,* 2019, p.19). Comparing the results of the current study to the data of the 2019 'Basel Study', Hungarian homeless people lived under worse or significantly worse circumstances than the whole homeless population of the city. Fifteen of the 20 interviewees (75 per cent) did not have a residence permit, while the proportion of unregistered people was only 23 per cent in the whole homeless population. The absence of a residence permit is a huge problem among the migrants, as it means they are not eligible for social services, allowances and health care without appropriate documents. As a result, unregistered Hungarians could not use the city-run social and health care services. Since the usage of shelters and soup kitchens is tied to residence permits, only a few Hungarians (5 persons) slept regularly in the night shelter. As the majority of the affected homeless people were excluded from shelters and other social services, the number of rough sleepers (15 persons) was rather high; half of all respondents (9 persons) spent nights in public places and six more slept in other places not intended for human habitation.

The group of participants was rather heterogeneous in their age, qualifications, living conditions, medical status and other features. The youngest interviewee was only 21, and the oldest was 61 years old. There were 17 men and only 3 women among the respondents. According to their citizenship, there were four Slovakians, three Romanians and two Serbians besides the 11 Hungarian citizens. However, all non-Hungarian citizens belonged to the Hungarian minority in their countries of origin, their mother language was Hungarian, and they identified themselves as Hungarians. Thirteen people lived (slept regularly) in Basel and seven overnighted on the German side of the border, in the towns of Weil am Rhein or Lörrach. These latter often commuted to Basel because of the better resources that a larger city can offer. Three-fourths of the participants had neither Swiss nor German residence permits, the others possessed L (short-term residency for three months) or

B permits (longer-term residency up to five years). Only two people arrived from the capital, Budapest, the others came from small or middle-sized towns and villages in the countryside.

As for their qualifications, most of them had only elementary school certification and merely six people finished secondary school (a waiter, two cooks, two shop assistants and an electrician were among them), not counting various informal training. None of them had a valid work contract at the time of data collection. Homeless people earned money from begging, street music or conducted some temporary work, such as helping out in the market, loading trucks or working on construction sites. Similarly to the homeless people living in Budapest (see Pőcze, 2014), begging was the less profitable and rather despised activity among the participants, and people could earn as much as 300-400 CHF a month this way. In contrast, street musicians could earn even 1 000-1 200 CHF in the same period of time.

The vast majority of the Hungarian homeless people came from dysfunctional and broken families. Particularly, younger men often lived together with their mothers in the same household directly before leaving the country. Most of these young men missed out completely in terms of not having a father role model because their fathers had left them in their early childhood. The responding homeless women had been previously psychically and physically abused by their partners, and the experienced violence hugely influenced their emigration. Homeless women were often mocked and insulted verbally by the men and became the target of sexual harassments in soup kitchens. Other studies also confirm that homeless women often suffer from the dominance and violence of homeless men and get into a particularly vulnerable and subordinated position through partnerships (Eigman *et al.,* 2017; Lutz *et al.,* 2017). All Hungarian homeless women mentioned such former violent partnerships with homeless men; however, they were single at the time of the interviews.

None of the responding people had any form of partnership at the time of data collection, however they all shared their experiences regarding former broken marriages or other forms of failed cohabitations. Most of them had children at home, however their relationship with them was rather irregular and superficial. Twelve of the 17 homeless men experienced divorce at least once in their lifetime, after which they moved out and left the house to their children and former wives. The homelessness of men after a divorce is a particular problem in Hungary. According to Győri and Maróthy (2008, p.18), two-thirds of all homeless people ended up in shelters or directly on the street because of a divorce, conflict with partners or domestic violence.

Table 1. Participants` Characteristics (n=20)

Variable	n	%
Age		
<25	1	5%
26-49	15	75%
>50	4	20%
Gender		
Male	17	85%
Female	3	15%
Family status		
Divorced	12	60%
Widow	1	5%
Single	7	35%
Citizenship		
Hungarian	11	55%
Romanian	3	15%
Slovakian	4	20%
Serbian	2	10%
Residence permit		
Without permit	15	75%
Short-term permit	2	10%
Long-term permit	3	15%
Qualifications		
Elementary school	14	70%
Secondary school	6	30%
Children		
0	6	30%
1-2	9	45%
>3	5	25%
Source of income		
Social allowance	5	25%
Begging	7	35%
Street music	3	15%
Other	5	25%

Dimension of geographical space

Most Hungarian homeless people in Basel were experienced travellers who had already explored many European cities before their arrival. The interviews revealed that they quickly learned the local social systems and used the visited cities and their social services 'functionally'. For example, some homeless people travelled to Southern France or Spain in the cold winter months. Others travelled to Luxemburg where the local Red Cross provided them free health services, such as dental and dermatological care.

It was rare for homeless people to arrive to Basel directly from Hungary. They regularly travelled first to European big cities (primarily to Vienna or Munich) that were closer to their home country. They spent a few weeks or months in these cities, and then travelled further to the West. Several Hungarian homeless people mentioned as a reason for further migration that there were a lot of Eastern European destitute people in Vienna, therefore they had only limited possibilities for begging, playing street music or doing temporary work (Szurovecz, 2018). Consequently, they had serious conflicts with the other homeless people for the scarce resources. Three-fourths of the Hungarian homeless people had lived in Vienna and one-third of them had turned up in Munich for a while before moving further to Switzerland.

In Basel, just a few Hungarian homeless people used the city's only night shelter regularly, because of its relatively high fees. All shelter users complained about thefts and regular conflicts with other homeless people, particularly with addicted and mentally ill tenants. Therefore, the majority of homeless Hungarians spent nights on the streets or in parks, burgled garages or abandoned industrial buildings, particularly in the summer. At the time of data collection, a group of Hungarians (5-6 men) overnighted in a burglarized garage in Weil am Rhein, Germany. Rough sleepers also visited the old city wall and its cave-like small holes, which was a rather uncomfortable and dangerous sleeping place.

Buying and processing food was a huge challenge for people without permanent housing. Since Basel is one of the most expensive cities not only in Switzerland but in the world, purchasing food in some supermarkets is a serious issue for poor and homeless people. Therefore, they bought food from the relatively cheap discount food stores like Lidl and Aldi. Even there they sought the cheapest products and bought quite low-quality food such as pre-packed cold cuts and sliced bread, which contained a lot of salt, fat and so-called 'bad' calories.

Sometimes they ate in fast food restaurants like McDonalds and Burger King, where they could buy relatively cheap hamburgers and sandwiches; they often chose these restaurants for warming-up during the winter days. Waste food collection from trash containers (a scene often seen in Eastern Europe) was not widespread among the Hungarian homeless people living in Basel. The participants suffered a lot in winter, when they attempted to find relatively warm and safe places to survive the cold. People who could not find a shelter received sleeping bags from the day-services and soup kitchens. Some churches in Basel allow homeless people to spend the night inside; they lay mattresses and covers on the benches that homeless people could use at night.

In the winter the personnel of railway stations and the airport were more tolerant to homeless people and allowed them to spend the night in waiting rooms. Two Hungarian homeless men overnighted at the airport (Euro Airport), where they were

allowed to sleep in the arrival side and could use the bathrooms too. Homeless people could stay in the terminal between 11pm and 4am when the airport was closed, however they had to leave the building early in the morning.

In the last few years there were lethal attacks against homeless people in Basel (two years ago a Croatian man was beaten to death and last year a Portuguese homeless person was killed), therefore several rough sleepers left the city centre and looked for a sleeping place in the more secured outskirts (Rudin, 2018).

Table 2. Trends of Migration and Places Used (n=20)

Variable	N	%
Arrival to Basel		
Train	13	65%
Bus	4	20%
Plane or car	3	15%
Spending the night in Basel city		
Yes	13	65%
No	7	35%
Current sleeping place		
Night shelter	5	25%
Streets and parks	9	45%
Other	6	30%
Sleeping place in the last year (multiple mentions)		
Night shelter	15	75%
Garages, cellars	11	55%
Streets and parks	18	90%
Other	7	35%
Eating in… (multiple mentions)		
Soup kitchens	20	100%
Buying food in groceries and eating it in parks	20	100%
Fast-food restaurants	12	60%
Planning to leave Basel in the next year		
Yes	7	35%
No	13	65%
Visited their families in the last year		
Yes, in Hungary	8	40%
Yes, in other country	4	20%
No	8	40%
Cities abroad where have stayed more than 3 weeks (multiple mentions)		
Vienna	16	80%
Munich	7	35%
Berlin	6	30%
Other	9	45%

Dimension of time

The daily routine of the homeless Hungarians was regularly well organised and followed a more-or-less planned structure, considering the opening hours of various institutions. This organised way of living incorporated the targeted usage of both social institutions and public places and contributed to the transparency and predictability of everyday life. In the morning, they regularly met next to Gassenküche (a soup kitchen where they could have some breakfast) in Kleinbasel (an area of Basel), where some people arrived from the nearby night shelter, and some came directly from the street, parks or their hidden sleeping places. After breakfast, particularly in summer, they stayed during the day in the city's parks or on the streets, where they begged, played music or collected reusable waste.

In the winter months, they rathered stay during the day in one of the several day-care centres maintained by local NGOs. In these institutions they could wash their clothes, have a shower, watch TV, play pool or simply talk with each other. They regularly spent the evenings in various soup kitchens, like Soup and Chill or Café Elim, where they could have a dinner for free or a reasonable price. A lot of homeless people attended these soup kitchens, even those who avoided other services, for warm food, friendly environment and the community itself. If they earned some money during the day, they preferred to use fast-food restaurants as an alternative solution to soup kitchens, where they could spend a whole night if they bought some cheap food. Street musicians and beggars often visited supermarkets for a few hours to warm up and use the toilets during the winter months. Security personnel regularly tolerated homeless people and allowed them to spend some time in the supermarkets.

Homeless people spent relatively a lot of time processing and eating food, and waiting for meals in soup kitchens. As they were unable to store food, they always had to purchase their daily supply fresh. Finding a proper sleeping place was always a huge challenge, particularly for the rough sleepers. Even people using regular sleeping places had to organise their place, for example packing their equipment in and out every day, before and after sleeping. Although homeless people are often considered 'idle' unemployed persons by the public (Hobden *et al*., 2007; Tsai *et al.,* 2018), they spend relatively much time earning money through begging, collecting reusable waste, doing temporary works and playing street music. They slept relatively little due to the unfavourable sleeping conditions they coped with, for instance they spent nights under noisy bridges, were afraid of attacks on the street or were disturbed in the parks by people walking by. Their leisure time was limited to the time spent together with other homeless people; they played cards, watched TV in the day-care facilities or talked with each other in parks or shelters.

Their administrative duties involved the arrangement of daily affairs at the police station or in social institutions. However, most of their administrative issues were related to telephone and internet subscriptions, as smartphones were often their only connections to the outer world. They often travelled by tram or bus within the city and used trains or regional buses to approach their sleeping places, if they were outside Basel.

Table 3 – Average Daily Time Spent on Various Activities (n=20)

Variable	Number of hours
Average time spent on various activities	
Finding, processing and eating food	2.8
Seeking appropriate sleeping place	1.3
Working (incl. begging, street music, etc.)	6.4
Sleeping	6.7
Leisure time and entertainment	3.4
Administrative duties	0.2
Travelling	1.2

Interpersonal relationships

Personal relationships of homeless people were regularly limited to each other and they often used institutions, mostly soup kitchens and day-care services, as meeting points. In the soup kitchens, homeless people regularly sat in closed groups strictly separated from each other based on their nationality. The largest 'national' groups – like Romanians, Hungarians and Ethiopians – always kept together, while other people (outsiders) attempted to join them or rather sat alone in one of the corners. The distance between these nationality-based groups was rather large and people practically never sought the proximity of other groups. Although a common language was the main group-building factor, other Eastern Europeans (Poles, Czechs and Slovakians) were occasionally admitted into the Hungarian group since they were too few to create their own groups.

The experienced members of the community had their own places at the tables of soup kitchens and the others respected their 'expert' position, and often turned to them for advice and support. These 'old' members had already gotten to know the social workers, enjoyed some advantage in the distribution of donated goods and were among the first ones to receive hotel vouchers in the cold winter days. These experienced homeless persons could help the younger ones a lot, teaching them how to use the system of homeless care and introducing the newcomers into the hidden world of the city's homeless people. However, even the experienced people kept their sleeping places secret because they feared being robbed and attacked at night. They also kept it secret if they found a service or institution that supported them with money, clothes or food.

Friendships and close relationships were quite rare among the homeless people in the study. Relationships were often superficial and interest-based. For example, they could find food and sleeping places easier and were able to defend themselves from violence better if they kept together. Although all participants visited the institutions of homeless care, only a little more than half of them had regular relationships with social workers. The others only dropped by and left the institutions without receiving counselling or other forms of social care. The main reason for this non-cooperation was a lack of language skills that hugely hampered communication with professionals. The participants' family relationships were mostly limited to weekly telephone calls; only half of them could afford to visit family members in their home country. In the absence of their families and friends, the vast majority of homeless people often felt lonely and they missed quality human relationships. Their social relationships (excluding family members and other homeless people) were often institution-based relationships with social workers and other helpers, and only one-third of the participants mentioned regular connections with Swiss non-homeless people. Most people with relationships were street musicians and beggars, who got to know some local residents during their work.

Table 4. Interpersonal Relationships (n=20)

Variable	n	%
Regular (daily) relationship to… (multiple mentions)		
Other homeless people	20	100%
Family members	6	30%
Social workers	12	60%
Others	14	70%
Social relationships to…		
Swiss non-homeless people	7	35%
Social workers, priests, administrators	20	100%
Others	13	65%
Irregular (periodical) relationship to… (multiple mentions)		
Other homeless people	20	100%
Family members	16	80%
Social workers	18	90%
Others	20	100%
Feel alone		
Often	16	80%
Sometimes	2	10%
Never	2	10%

Institutional relationships

All participating Hungarian homeless people used at least one of the low-threshold social services. However, most of the city's services either charged some money for the food and shelter or demanded an official residence permit from their guests. Thus, unregistered homeless people, who neither had a permit nor enough money for food, were practically excluded from these social institutions. Only one soup kitchen (Soup and Chill) provided free food for homeless people, however it was open only for the winter months.

In the low-threshold institutions, none of the responding homeless people received professional social work such as individual casework, advocacy or empowerment. Social workers only registered them in the institutional administration, occasionally gave them some clothes and food or filled in a voucher to the night shelter.

Almost all participants used soup kitchens at the time of data collection, particularly the free Soup and Chill. Homeless people liked to combine the services of various institutions; for example, they could receive free cocoa in a soup kitchen, dessert in a day-care service and a whole evening meal in another soup kitchen. Thus, more than three-fourths of the participants used two or more services regularly. As almost all day-care services were tied to residence permits, therefore only half of the participants could use them. However, some homeless people (particularly the elderly and ill ones) were allowed in without permit in the winter months.

The Swiss health care system is based on private insurers, which finance the treatments in both the public and private services. People must choose a medical insurer and pay the insurance fees individually (Wang and Aspalter, 2006). In the case of poor people registered in Basel, the canton pays the insurance fees directly to the companies. Apart from four men and a woman, Hungarian homeless people did not have any health insurance as they were unable to pay for it on the market of private insurers and (in the absence of registration) they were not eligible for the support of the canton. Although homeless people were also eligible for emergency care, several respondents did not dare to go to the clinics because they feared deportation and that their 'illegal' residency status would be discovered.

Similar to the homeless population in Hungary (Fadgyas-Freyler, 2017), the majority of homeless people in Basel suffered from various chronic diseases. Physical and mental diseases as well as substance abuse were common in the group. Some men suffered from digestive problems, while others had untreated psychiatric illnesses. An elderly man lost one of his legs in a car accident, and another man had a missing eye because of a childhood accident. Diagnosed and undiagnosed mental illnesses like paranoia, depression and anxiety often occurred among the Hungarian homeless people. Loneliness, the lack of friendships and intimate relationships endanger the psychical balance of people even without homelessness and social

exclusion (Gruebner *et al.,* 2017). However, the constant stress factors and the constant striving to secure daily existence amplified the probability of various mental and psychosomatic illnesses for homeless people (Parker and Dykeman, 2013; Watson *et al.,* 2016).

Frozen limbs and injuries from physical attacks also occurred among the participants, but only rarely. For instance, a middle-aged man sleeping on the street was stabbed by young people with a knife. Another young man fell from the scaffolding in a construction site and his knee was seriously injured. A middle-aged man had an inflamed tooth that he tried to operate himself causing a serious infection in his mouth. Since none of them had health insurance, they did not receive professional medical care.

Consumption of alcohol, marihuana and synthetic drugs occurred regularly among the Hungarian homeless. Some of them not only used, but sold drugs, too. Homeless men sometimes dealt drugs even in the soup kitchens, where they sold it in small plastic bags to provide for their own consumption.

The participants had good or at least satisfactory relationships with the Basel police. Although, as EU citizens, they could stay in the city for three months without a long-term residence permit, police often turned a blind eye on the expired documents, if there were no other problems with the affected people otherwise.

> *Only those are arrested and expelled who cannot behave. I have been living here for four years without papers, they know me and leave me alone. (Elek, 41)*

Conflicts with the police because of minor criminal activities like theft, drug consumption and street fights occurred relatively often. However, according to social workers, larger crimes like robbery or homicide had never occurred in the Hungarian homeless community. Although police were generally tolerant of the homeless people, some younger Hungarian men experienced confrontation: policemen took them to the Swiss-French border and forced them to go towards France. Despite the general tolerance, some Hungarians were deported from the country. In such cases, the city court decided about the deportation and the police enforced it. They purchased bus or train tickets for the affected people and put them on the vehicles directly, since people slated for deportation had sold their tickets earlier and remained in the city. Nonetheless, these extraditions were not really effective, as one of the deported homeless men returned to the city in two weeks, and another man got off the bus in Vienna and soon appeared in Basel again.

> *At home? This is my home, I live here, and I am already at home.* (Miklós, 57)

Table 5. Institutional Relationships (n=20)

Variable	n	%
Regular (daily) relationship with… (multiple mentions)		
Soup kitchens	17	85%
Night shelters	5	25%
Day-care services	11	55%
Other services	7	35%
Number of used services…		
1	4	20%
2	10	50%
3 or more	6	30%
Seen by a doctor in the previous year		
No	12	60%
Once	6	30%
More than twice	2	10%
Imprisonment or arrest experienced		
Yes	7	35%
No	13	65%
Health insurance		
Yes	5	25%
No	15	75%
Deportation experienced		
No	16	80%
Yes	4	20%
Bank account		
No	6	30%
Yes, in Switzerland	5	25%
Yes, abroad	9	45%

Discussion

To understand the scarce number of social services that migrant, unregistered homeless people can use in Basel, it is important to examine the fundamental characteristics of the Swiss social system. The Swiss welfare state cannot be clearly categorised according to Esping-Andersen's widespread welfare state typology (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Although the country has an undisputed conservative welfare state heritage and its institutions rooted in the so-called Bismarckian social state (see Dallinger, 2015; Dietz *et al.,* 2015), the modern welfare services of Switzerland are rather close to the liberal welfare model. This liberal welfare model incorporates a pay-as-you-go health care system, a social care system mostly dominated by low threshold services, a social policy based on conditional in-cash allowances as well as a pension system in which the first, state-run pillar is rather scarce (Wang and Aspalter, 2006). As the cantons have relatively strong independence in social legislation (see Bundesverfassung, 1999),

and they regulate their social systems in their own constitutions and social acts, 26 different micro social systems work in the country with various services and financial supports (Armingeon *et al.,* 2004). Basel city is an independent canton with its own constitution and social legislation (Verfassung des Kantons Basel-Stadt, 2005). However, neither the constitution nor the social act regulates exactly the definition of homelessness and the services of homeless care. Both legal documents reflect the social political principles of less eligibility, subsidiarity and locality (see Zombori, 1994; Dallinger, 2015). Consequently, almost all social services and allowances, even the low-threshold services, are tied to residence permits, thus unregistered people are practically excluded from the usage of in-cash and in-kind supports (see Kanton Basel-Stadt, 2018a; Kanton Basel-Stadt, 2018b).

In the area of homeless care, the city co-finances the low-threshold social institutions (soup kitchens, day-care services, night shelters and street work), however these services are almost always maintained by civil organisations. The only city-run institution is the night shelter that provides accommodations for 75 men and 28 women, however the fees are so high (40 CHF for a single night), that many unregistered homeless people rather avoid the shelter and sleep rough. Therefore, around one-third of all places in the night shelter were unused even in the winter (Drilling *et al.*, 2019, p.40). In the winter months, homeless people were sometimes allowed to sleep at the Salvation Army's temporary shelter, or they received some vouchers from the social department to spend the frosty nights at a discount hotel.

Most of the homeless care institutions often provide similar services, and they are rather close to each other in location. They have different opening hours (some of them are open only in winter, at night, at weekends, etc.), fees (some places ask money for food, coffee or washing, while some do not), requirements (some of them require residence permits, some do not) and serve various target groups (designated institutions for refugees, sex workers or substance users), so that homeless people often do not know where to go. For example, there are a lot of soup kitchens in the city, however psychiatric services for mentally ill people or gynaecological care for homeless women are only rarely available. A deficiency of the system is that homeless families cannot be placed together, and (unless they receive emergency apartments) children must be separated from their parents and sent to institutions of child care in case of family homelessness.

The system of social housing is not available in Basel; the city provides only 156 so-called emergency apartments, where people are allowed to reside up to six months (Drilling *et al.,* 2019, p.44). However the usage of such apartments is not explicitly based on social needs; they are available in the case of housing crises (e.g. natural disasters or fire damage). Only families with children are allowed to use the two to four-room emergency apartments, childless adults and couples must go

directly to the institutions of homeless care. Because of the strict requirements, emergency apartments are almost unavailable for the Hungarian (and even for many local) homeless people.

Social workers in the low threshold services were regularly overburdened and they could focus only on the most urgent problems due to the lack of time. The most significant obstacles in the development of a supportive procedure were the lack of language skills and the general mistrust of Hungarian homeless people towards the Swiss social workers. Homeless people often considered the practitioners as official persons who can control or report them to the authorities any time, therefore they rather keep their distance from the helpers. Unfortunately, social workers of soup kitchens, night shelters and day-care services hardly knew anything about the Hungarian homeless people.

> *We do not know too much about them. We do not speak their language and they do not speak ours either. Sometimes people disappear and then new ones appear in the group, but we cannot really get in touch with them.* (Social worker of a soup kitchen)

A progressive reform in Basel's social policy would be important for the adequate risk mitigation of non-Swiss homeless people. Through the current restrictions the city attempts to protect its social services and allowances from the migrating poor and favours domestic homeless people to the migrants. This protective social policy aims at tackling 'welfare tourism' from the developing EU countries and the poorer Swiss cantons. However, due to these structural restrictions, dozens of destitute homeless people remain without any essential social care and shelter (despite their eventual social needs), even if there is a significant vacant capacity in the system of homeless care.

The primary task for the city's social policy should be to redefine and reshape the system of low-threshold services. These institutions should function as needs-based instead of residence-based services in order to protect the most vulnerable social groups of the city. Doing so, it would be necessary to determine an overall social minimum that would cover the most essential needs of people by guaranteeing the minimum-level of shelter and food to all. Thus, these generally available low-threshold services (such as night-shelters, soup kitchens and street work) could function as access points to the higher-level facilities.

Conclusions

The paper applied Thiersch's lifeworld oriented social work approach to examine the role of time and space in homeless people's everyday life as well as their personal and institutional relationships. Doing so, twenty Hungarian homeless people were interviewed in the homeless institutions of Basel, focusing on their current living conditions.

In the case of Hungarian homeless people living in Basel, time has a huge importance as the structure of community is constantly changing and forming: old members leave, and new ones join the group relatively frequently. During the six months of data collection, 22 people were present among the city's Hungarian homeless. Half of them left after a short period of time: they either moved further to other Western European countries or returned home. However, the core of the community remained together during this period of time: people got in touch and cooperated with each other, occasionally defined mutual goals (e.g. to find a temporary job or a shelter) and supported the newcomers with advice. Time was of huge importance in structuring homeless peoples' everyday life from breakfast through the daily activities to seeking sleeping places at night. This time structure was largely based on the opening hours of various institutions in homeless care.

Mutually experienced space also had a huge importance in structuring the everyday life of Hungarian homeless people. Basel is a middle-sized European city with a rather small city centre. All responding homeless people spent their days in the old town (even those who overnighted in the outskirts) where the majority of social services could be found. Soup kitchens, night shelters and the day-services of NGOs were relatively close to each other, so that people could easily walk from one institution to another. Hungarian homeless people mostly used these services in the morning and evening hours, while they stayed at public places like parks and the main train station during the day. Other public services, such as post offices, administrative services and medical facilities were also within walking distance. This concentrated institutional and spatial infrastructure could contribute to stronger relationships between homeless people, compared to a really big city environment, where people are geographically separated from each other. The alienating effect of a big city environment in the case of homeless people was explored by studies carried out in Berlin (Schulte-Scherlebeck *et al.,* 2015), Los Angeles and Tokyo (Marr, 2015).

The limited geographical area significantly influenced the intensity and frequency of interpersonal relationships, too. In the absence of families, colleagues and friends, homeless people sought each other's proximity and spent a lot of time together. The common cultural identity and language made these relationships even stronger (see Eigmann *et al.,* 2017). Mostowska (2014) and Kastanje and Hoff

(2019) observed and identified similar trends among Polish homeless people living in Brussels and the Eastern European homeless people living in Copenhagen. Nonetheless, these interpersonal relationships cannot be considered friendships; all interviewees mentioned that they did not want to have friends among the other homeless people because they feared being deceived, robbed and exploited. They often talked about their previous negative experiences and general disappointment in the interviews.

References

Amann, A. (1994) Offene Altenhilfe [Open Elderly Care], in: H. Reimann (Ed.) Das Alter: Einführung in die Gerontologie [*Aging: Introduction to Gerontology*] (Stuttgart: Enke).

Armingeon, K., Bertozzi, F. and Bonoli, G. (2004) Swiss Worlds of Welfare, *West European Politics* 27(1) pp.20-44.

BFS (2018) *GDP by Canton 2008-2016* (Neuchatel: Bundesamt für Statstics).

BFS (2019) *Quality of Life in the Cities* (Neuchatel: Bundesamt für Statstics).

Bundesverfassung der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft [Constitution of the Swiss Federation], valid from 18. April 1999.

Busch-Geertsema, V., Culhane, D. and Fitzpatrick, S. (2016) Developing a Global Framework for Conceptualising and Measuring Homelessness, *Habitat International* 55 pp.124-132.

Böhnisch, L. and Schröer, W. (2012) *Sozialpolitik und Soziale Arbeit* [Social Policy and Social Work] (Weinheim/Basel: Beltz Juventa).

Dallinger, U. (2015) *Sozialpolitik im internationalen Vergleich* [Social Policy in International Comparison] (Konstanz: UVK Verlag).

Dietz, B, Frevel, B. and Toens, K. (2015) *Sozialpolitik kompakt* [Social Policy Compact]. (Wiesbaden: Springer VS)

Drilling, M., Dittmann, J., Bischoff, T. and Temesvary, Zs. (2019) Obdachlosigkeit, Wohnungslosigkeit und prekäres Wohnen: Ausmass, Profil und Bedarf in der Region Basel [Homelessness, Rooflessness and Precarious Housing: Magnitude, Profile and Need in the Basel Region], *Lives Working Paper* 76. pp.1-65.

Eigmann, M., Friedrich, B. and Gerull, S. (2017) EU-Migrant_innen in der niederschwelligen Wohnungslosenhilfe [EU Migrants in the Low-Threshold Services for Homeless People], in: S. Gillich and R. Keicher (Eds.) *Ohne Wohnung in Deutschland: Armut, Migration und Wohnungslosigkeit* [Without Housing in Germany: Poverty, Migration and Homelessness] pp.287-297. (Freiburg am Breisgau: Lambertus Verlag).

Esping-Andersen, G. (1990) *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton: University Press).

Fadgyas-Freyler, P. (2017) A hajléktalan emberek általános jellemzői és egészségi állapotuk egy adminisztratív adatbázis alapján [General Characteristics and Medical Conditions of Homeless People based on an Administrative Database], *Esély* 3. pp.102-122.

FEANTSA (2017) *ETHOS European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion* (Brussels: FEANTSA).

Flick, U. (2014) *Sozialforschung: Methoden und Anwendungen* [Social Research: Methods and Applications] (Hamburg: Rowohlt).

Gödri, I. (2018) Nemzetközi vándorlás [International Migration], in: J. Monostori, P. Őri. and Zs. Spéder (ed.) *Demográfiai Portré 2018* [Demography Portrait 2018], pp.237-270. (Budapest: KSH).

Gruebner, O., Rapp, M. A., Adli, M., Kluge, U., Galea, S. and Heinz, A. (2017) Cities and Mental Health, *Dtsch Arztebl Int* 114(8) pp.121-127.

Győri, P. and Maróthy, M. (2008) *Merre tovább? Egy nemzeti hajléktalanügyi stratégia lehetséges keretei* [Which Way Forward? Possible Frameworks of a National Homeless Strategy] (Budapest: Pro Domo).

Hobden, K.L., Tompsett, C.J., Fales, A.K. and Toro, P.A. (2007) Comparing Public Opinion and Prevalence of Homelessness in Canada to the United States, *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 16(1) pp.76-92.

Kanton Basel-Stadt (2018a) *Informationen zu den Unterstützungsleistungen der Sozialhilfe* [Information on the Supports of the Social Allowance System] (Basel-Stadt: Department für Wirtschaft, Soziales und Umwelt).

Kanton Basel-Stadt (2018b) *Unterstützungsrichtlinien des Departments für Wirtschaft, Soziales und Umwelt des Kantons Basel-Stadt* [Supporting Guidelines of the Department for Economics, Social Affairs and Environment of Canton Basel City].

Kastanje, M. and Hoff, N.M. (2019) *Unregistered Homeless Migrants in Copenhagen: Experiences from Danchurchsocial 2017* (Copenhagen: Kirkens Korshaer).

Kováts A. and Soltész, B. (2018) *Mit tudunk a kivándorlásról? Műhelybeszélgetések* [What Do We Know about Emigration? Discussions] (Budapest: Gondolat Kiadói Kör).

Kraus, B. (2015) The Life We Live and the Life We Experience: Introducing the Epistemological Difference between Lifeworld (Lebensworld) and 'Life Conditions' (Lebenslage), *Social Work and Society* 13(2) https://www.socwork.net/sws/article/view/438/816 (accessed: 02.10.2019).

Kühl, J. (2016) Walking Interviews als Methode zur Erhebung alltäglicher Raumproduktionen [Walking Interviews as Methods to the Production of Space], *Europa Regional* 23(2) pp.35-48.

Lutz, R., Sartorius, W. and Simon, T. (2017) *Lehrbuch der Wohnungslosenhilfe: Eine Einführung in Praxis, Positionen und Perspektiven* [Textbook of Homeless Care: An Introduction to the Practice, Positions and Perspectives] (Weinheim/ Basel: Beltz Juventa).

Marr, M. D. (2015) *Better Must Come: Exiting Homelessness in Two Global Cities* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).

Mayring, P. (2000) Qualitative Content Analysis, *Qualitative Social Research* 1(2) http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1089/2385 (accessed: 13.09.2019).

Mostowska, M. (2014) Homelessness Abroad: "Place Utility" in the Narratives of the Polish Homeless in Brussels, *International Migration* 52(1) pp.118-129.

Office of Statistics Canton Basel City (2019) *Wohnbevölkerung des Kantons Basel-Stadt nach Staatsangehörigkeit seit 1990* [Population of Canton Basel City by Citizenship since 1990] (Basel: Statistiches Amt).

Parker, R. D. and Dykeman, S. (2013) The Reality of Homeless Mobility and Implications for Improving Care, *Community Health* 38. pp.685-689.

Payne, M. (2014) *Modern Social Work Theory* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).

Pőcze, F. (2014) *A Moszkva tér gyermekei* [Children of the Moscow Square] (Budapest: Libri).

Rudin, P. (2018) Angeklagter nach Obdachlosen-Mord in Basel: "Habe gespürt, dass ich diese Person umbringen soll", [Accused after Homeless Murder in Basel: "I felt that I have to kill this person] *BzBasel* 13.11.2018, https://www.bzbasel.ch/basel/basel-stadt/angeklagter-nach-obdachlosen-mord-in-basel-habe-gespuert-dass-ich-diese-person-umbringen-soll-133712322 (accessed: 19.08.2019).

Sárkány, P. (2013) *Theorie und Praxis Sozialer Arbeit* [Theory and Practice of Social Work] (Baden-Baden: Tectum Verlag).

Sárkány, P. (2015) *Szociálpedagógiai elméletek* [Theories of Social Pedagogy] (Budapest: Jel Kiadó).

Schulte-Scherlebeck, C., Lange, C. and Kletzin, T. (2015) *Lebenswege und Wohnungslosigkeit: Eine Analyse biografischer Interviews in Berlin* [Ways of Life and Homelessness: An Analysis of Biographical Interviews in Berlin] (Berlin: Logos Verlag).

SEM Staatssekretariat für Migration (2018) *Statistik Zuwanderung: Ausländerinnen und Ausländer in der Schweiz* [Statistics of Immigration: Aliens in Switzerland] (Bern: Embargo).

Staub-Bernasconi, S. (2016) Social Work and Human Rights: Linking Two Traditions of Human Rights in Social Work, *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work* 1(1) pp.40-49.

Szurovecz, I. (2018) Aki itt éhen hal, az meg is érdemli [Who Starves Here, Deserves it], *Abcúg* 26.06.2018, https://abcug.hu/aki-itt-ehen-hal-az-meg-is-erdemli/ (accessed: 19.08.2019).

Tsai, J., Lee, C.Y.S., Shen, J., Southwick, S.M. and Pietrzak, R.H. (2018) Public Exposure and Attitudes about Homelessness, *Journal of Community Psychology* 47(1) pp.76-92.

Thiersch, H., Grünwald, K. and Köngeter, S. (2012) Lebensweltorientierte Soziale Arbeit [Lifeworld Oriented Social Work], in: Thole, W. (Ed.) Grundriss Sozialer Arbeit: Ein einführendes Handbuch [*Basics of Social Work: An Introductory Manual*], pp.175-196. (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag).

Thiersch, H. (2014) *Lebenswertorientierte Soziale Arbeit: Aufgaben der Praxis im sozialen Wandel* [Lifeworld Orientation in Social Work: Tasks for the Practice in Social Change] (Weinheim/Basel: Beltz Juventa).

Váradi, M. M. (2018) *Migráció Alulnézetből* [Migration from a Different Perspective]. (Budapest: Argumentum).

Verfassung des Kantons Basel-Stadt [Constitution of Canton Basel City]. valid from 23. March 2005.

Wang, D. and Aspalter, C. (2006) The Austrian and Swiss Welfare State System in International Comparison, *Journal of Societal and Social Policy* 5(2) pp.25-49.

Watson, J., Crawley, J. and Kane, D. (2016) Social Exclusion, Health and Hidden Homelessness, *Public Health* 139 pp.96-102.

Weisser, G. (1978) Über die Unbestimmtheit des Postulats der Maximierung der Sozialprodukts [About the Uncertainty of Postulates of the Maximization of Social Products], in: G. Weisser (Ed.) *Beiträge zur Gesellschaftspolitik* [Contributions to Societal Policy] pp.542-574. (Göttingen: Öffentliches Leben).

Ethical Relation and Control: Exploring Limits in the Domestic Sphere of Home

Susana Batle Cladera, Jezabel Cartoixà Garcia, Marta Llobet Estany and Joan Uribe Vilarrodona

GRECS – Grup de Recerca sobre Exclusio i Control Socials, Barcelona, Spain
University of Barcelona, Spain

Abstract_ *This paper sets out the service users' life histories and the frontline providers' practice findings -récit de pratique- who have participated in the Housing First pilot project implemented in Barcelona under the name of Primer la Llar (2015-2018). This new method of working is carried out in house. For this analysis, we focus on accompaniment in the home. Establishing a professional relationship, accompanying service users to autonomy and recovery has specific features, especially locating in the home. There, we observe the intersection of both the domestic sphere and the work sphere. Focusing on the first 24 months, we analyze how two feelings emerge horizontality; the sense of controlling someone and being controlled by others, and feeling the house as one's own. The results show how building an ethical relationship seems to be the key to facilitating an accompaniment according to the Housing First philosophy.*

Key words_ *Housing First, home, control, professional practice, ethical relationship, supported housing*

ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online

Introduction

In 2015, Barcelona City Council were the first in Spain to provide the First Housing Pilot Programme called *Primer la Llar* (2015-2018). This method became the first local administration to carry out the organizational and technical leadership of a programme with these characteristics in Spain. The programme includes 50 participants selected from a randomization process and who meet the eligibility criteria (Fortea and Herruz, 2017) and two social entities that competed for management (Sant Joan de Déu Serveis Socials and a temporary joint venture formed by Suara, Sant Pere Claver and Garbet), each of which comprises 25 participants. ESMES -a specialized team that already exists in the city- offers specialized medical care in mental health to the programme.

Its relevance engaging people who have experienced long-term homelessness and co-occurring disorders identified as chronic in the care circuits justifies the implementation of the programme. Likewise, Fortea and Herruz (2017) point out the following reasons that justify it: being a member of the Eurocities[1] association and the consensus in the XAPSLL[2] to start the programme (Fortea and Herruz, 2017). This, coupled with a moment of political opportunity, led to the 2015-2018 pilot project. Many publications show evidence of the success of the HF model of care programme. In this sense, scientific studies demonstrate HF's effectiveness related to economic profitability (Ly and Latimer, 2015; Pleace, 2016) and also with the reduction of the use of shelters, prison, hospital emergencies and psychiatric admission (Stefancic *et al*., 2013; Stergiopoulos *et al*., 2015; PHF, 2018).

Theoretical Framework

Professional practice

This model is framed in 8 core principles that declare a mission statement (Pleace, 2016) about how professionals should conduct their practice. If we focus on the first one, housing as a human right and the last one, flexible support for as long as it is required, we observe how the emergence of two dimensions make an essential difference compared to the staircase model; space and time. At Treatment First models, work is carried out in a space delimited to the institution or to the office and time-limited support (Sahlin, 2005). Instead of these, the HF main differences are schedule flexibility, visit length, and a new support scenario designed by the housing, the neighbourhood, and the accompaniments to other services. "The

1 Eurocities is a network of large European cities created in 1989 to share experiences and develop responses at local level.

2 Homeless Care Network in Barcelona.

housing first philosophy aligns most closely with supported housing models" (White, 2013, p.42) even though supported housing is not a new scenario within the social intervention in Barcelona. Besides, principles 2, choice and control for service users; 3, separation of housing and treatment; 6, active engagement without coercion and 7, person-centered planning (Pleace, 2016) leads to reshaping forces in the relationship between both parties: frontline providers and service users (Foucault, 2007). Social teams develop an *inconditionnelle* support (Gesmond *et al.*, 2016) and *inconditionnée* (Lelubre, 2013).

HF programme implementation in Europe began as pilot projects (Busch-Geertsema, 2013), therefore, within a context of flexibility, experimentation and intuition. It is an ideal scenario to transform reality. As indicated by Llobet and Aguilar (2016) about the city of Barcelona, "when the project has an experimental element as in this case, the intervention itself can be a space for reflection, self-knowledge, and self-training" (Llobet and Aguilar, 2016, p.29).

The concept of professional practice refers to the set of actions that take place within the labour framework. According to Barbier (1999), practitioners talk about their practice when describing their activity, a description that contains different intentions and sensitivities. It also implies a transmission of wisdom and knowledge -unidirectional or bidirectional. This background suggests the encounter with that other -the service user- and the establishment of a bond or professional relationship.

Ethical relationship

The social intervention, as a label for practice in the staircase model, already draws intentionality. As Sáenz (2008) indicates, "the social intervention constitutes, a process of rational order, because it relies on a manifest intention to modify or transform a situation that is considered undesirable and socially unfair, first of all for the group that suffers it" (Sáenz, 2008, p.189). This consciousness implies a professional prescription after an assessment of previously classified and categorized subjects. According to this reification, the conception of social attention appears where the practices "are a disciplinary foci" (Matus, 2016, p.14).

However, the HF philosophy converts professional practice into accompaniment. In other words, as an ethical relationship. Moving beyond social intervention to this ethical relationship implies many contradictions. This epistemological position means the use of the word accompaniment as a concept of concious use (Planella, 2016). According to Planella (2016) in reference to Susanne Bruyelle's work, "Accompanying is allowing yourself to be challenged by the other, it is accepting the encounter with the other without a previous project nor a preconceived idea, it is, undoubtedly, to appreciate him, to respect him for what they are" (Planella, 2016, p.36). It is a collective dynamic of reflection (Rhenter, 2013) where listening, rather

than the transmission of wisdom, acquires relevance (Gómez-Esteban, 2012), because the professional relationship depends on a "method that must take users' narratives seriously" (Rhenter, 2013, p.66).

It is an act of humility, closeness and respect. Both parties – service user-staff – must define the ethical relationship in a constant exercise of confidence and horizontality (Lo Sardo, 2016) to humanize it (Strauss and Davidson, 1997). Not from the vision of cases to manage (Everett and Nelson, 1992) but from a particular relationship (Buxant *et al*., 2016) concrete and situated (Goffman, 1991; Fontaine, 2010; Garneau and Namian, 2017) it will be possible to work together towards recovery (Buxant *et al*., 2016). This exploratory practice becomes a learning space. Consequently, "*all learning, structured or not, intentional or not, is a socially situated and socially constructed act"* (Delory-Momberger, 2014, p.709). From here, we observe how the practice, or in other words, the knowledge associated with it, is embodied; it is located in an acting body. As Zúñiga (2006) states, "without any idea to guide the action, it is only activity; without acts that embody the concepts, this is only lucubration, fantasy, illusion… "(Zuñiga, 2006, p.39).

The purpose of the accompaniment is to work on a particular and unique type of autonomy, framed in the context of daily life and aimed at promoting decision-making capacity. To understand it, it is necessary to focus on the two core principles that we lack; 4, *Recovery orientation* and 5, *Harm reduction* (Pleace, 2016) and move away from the finalist understandings to signify the accompaniment as the process of "*being in recovery*" (Davidson *et al*., 2009, p.35). In this context, housing as space where daily life develops (Cortés Alcalá, 1995; García Luque, 2016) plays a crucial role. In this sense, home is a new scenario as well as a challenge that will invite both parties to interact from a new role or *front* (Goffman, 2017). This fact is somewhat controversial.

Home: a new scenario

Housing, as literature tells us, has an active link with the recovery processes. Different studies about supportive and supported housing (Kirsh *et al*., 2009; Sylvestre *et al*., 2014) show the positive impact of access to housing for people with mental illness. White (2013) draws from the literature review that the characteristics of the recovery related to housing are: a sense of meaning and purpose, empowerment, hope for the future, social and reciprocal connections, personal choice, control and self-determination, taking responsibility, managing illness, personal growth and development, community integration, citizenship, social justice and participation.

However, having a flat does not mean having a home. People accessing the programme enter a house, a physical space that goes beyond four walls and a roof. What providers are expecting is that the person ends up making this space their

home. However, the sense of home is intricate and multidimensional. It is a "socially constructed concept that can hold multiple and often contested meanings for different people simultaneously" (Sims *et al*., 2009, p.305).

According to the literature, having a home of one's own, feeling it as a home, means having a sense of control of environment over one's own life (Després, 1991; Somerville, 1997; Dupuis and Thorns, 1998; Mallett, 2004; Leith, 2006). This place of security allows the person to create an identity, routines and develop a daily life (Leith, 2006; Padgett, 2007; Dorvil and Boucher-Guèvremont, 2013; Pleace, 2016) which is reflected into being able to manage, satisfy, try, reflect on the activities of everyday life (Borg *et al*., 2005; Padgett, 2007; White, 2013).

Having a home allows us to meet a set of social requirements, through which the normal processes of socialization and normalization of societies are shaped and developed (Cortés Alcalá, 1995; King, 2004; García Luque, 2016). White (2013), picking up Kirkpatrick's work, points out that housing can be seen as a resource "that enables the balance between socializing and privacy, positioning people in the world in such a way that they can take advantage of the social capital provided by the surroundings" (White, 2013, p.69).

The people who enter the programme come from unstable housing journeys, with long periods of residential exclusion. During this period, they have been traveling through public spaces or those belonging to others, they have been living in environments threatened by hostile behaviour (Bachiller, 2008), depending on others. According to Parsell (2016), *"living in the city public spaces idealised housing as a means to gain control over how they organised their days*" (Parsell, 2015, p.3190). Having a home means being able to live peacefully, find peace and the security of being able to decide.

In this sense, when entering the programme, the person leaves the institutional circuit in which he has been living, situating himself in a space where he feels more autonomous, secure and has greater personal control.

Frontline providers also leave the institutional work scenario, so they must attend to service users in an outreach space; full of uncertainties. Space does not belong to them. In the domestic of the home, frontline providers cannot establish this type of exclusion and spatial domination that they can hold in different kinds of equipment or protected flats.

When the home becomes an intervention scenario, it becomes a place of confluence between two spheres; the domestic and the professional one (Angus *et al*., 2005). Home care interventions can challenge meanings of home given by people (Sims *et al*., 2009). Professional practice within the home can be an intrusion into the domestic space and a threat to the person's intimacy (Magnusson and Lützén,

1999). In the same way, it also affects the perception of their decision-making capacity, their autonomy and the sense of control and security in a location that is supposed to be their own.

To ensure this does not happen, it is necessary to have an accompaniment relationship based on unconditionality, trust and respect (Davidson *et al*., 2009). Housing, as new scenario where accompaniment is carried out, must be understood in its material, social and psychological dimension (Lo Sardo, 2016).

This article shows the evolution of the ethical-relationship between frontline providers and service users in the context of home.

Methodology

Parallel to the implementation of the three-year pilot project, two longitudinal three-year qualitative investigations were commissioned; one focused on the social care teams and the other on the service users. Each of them is linked to a doctoral thesis. The first one deals with the professional practice of the social management teams and the second one with the meanings of home given by the service user.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to share some of the dilemmas and limitations that have appeared during the first 24 months of the pilot project implementation. In this case, those arising in relation to two issues; the attention centered on the recognition of the right to live and the accompaniment in the service user dwelling. The richness of these results is in the dialogue between the two samples faced with dilemmas that arise in the same scenario. For this purpose, results from the first two phases of fieldwork carried out between 2016 and 2019 will be used. Both samples have suffered modifications concerning each phase.

Substudy: frontline providers

The first substudy aims to analyse professional practice as a singular and personalized action, contextualized in a pilot project. From this perspective, we can observe its transformation between the previous model, Staircase of Transition, and the incoming one, HF. It is innovative for several reasons; there are no previous similar studies in our country and also, its longitudinal nature allows a detailed observation of the construction and assimilation of the practice over time.

After a literature review, we observe the necessity to generate theory. It is because of that it has been decided to use grounded theory methodology. We have selected a technique -open in-depth interviews- and a strategy -practice story; *récit de pratique*- (Bertaux, 2005; Desgagné, 2005; Audet, 2006; Guignon and Morrissette,

2006; Leplay, 2006; Hurtubise and Rose, 2013; Delory-Momberger, 2014), thinking about the singularity of the studied phenomenon. This strategy is the result of life stories adaptation towards the narratives of professional practice in social contexts. In this way, the focus is placed on the experience narrated because "it proposes a form of empirical research adapted to the capture of the logic proper to this or that social world, of this or that category of the of situation" (Bertaux, 2005, p.17). This approach allows the professionals' voices to emerge from reflection and sincerity, while the researchers place themselves at a respectful distance that allows fluent conversation without judgment. Thus, it generates a favourable space for dialogue and exchanges of reflection, even learning.

The frontline social teams, in the first phase, were composed of 5 women and 6 men. The list of work categories was 4 social workers, 2 social educators, 4 social integrators and 1 peer worker. In the second phase the sample included 5 women but has added one more man. According to the labour category there are 4 social workers, 3 social educators and 5 social integrators. The figure of the peer worker, for the moment, does not exist anymore.

Fieldwork has been carried out in two phases. The first one between March and December 2017 and the second one between June 2018 and January 2019. Two researchers carried out 9 in-depth group interviews, lasting between one and a half and three hours. They have offered the maximum flexibility to adapt duration and location to work dynamics and schedule due to the singularity of this programme

Sub-study: service users

The second sub-study aims to investigate the effects of the programme on the service users. That is, to understand the experience they are having within the programme. For this, we use the qualitative methodology that has already been used in HF projects such as *Chez Soi* / *At Home* of Canada. The narrative approach enables the emergence of different levels of analysis that are interdependent such as research and practice and contribute to telling a complete story (cited from Nelson, *et al*., 2015 based on Rappaport, 1995, p.78). In short, qualitative research based on narratives can provide elements to understand the project, but also provide knowledge for practice and social policy (Nelson *et al*., 2015).

The sample, in the early phase, comprises 22 people out of 50. Concerning these 22, their average age is 53.4 years. Among these, 17 are men, 12 were born in Spain and 5 from migrant backgrounds. Five are women, 4 born in Spain and one born in another EU country. It was decided to expand with a reserve group composed of three people in case any of the 22 service users left the programme or it would not be possible to have access in the following phases. In the second phase, two service users from the sample were lost to follow up in this study and replaced by

a person from the reserve group -with similar profile characteristics-, resulting in a sample of 21 service users. From 15 men, 11 were born in Spain and 5 came from migrant backgrounds. Five are women, 4 were born in Spain and one was born in another EU country.

In-depth interviews were conducted face-to-face. The length of each meeting varied from 3 to 5 hours. In the most extensive interviews, and out of respect for the service user, it was carried out in two sessions. The sessions were carried out by one or two researchers.

Ethical issues

In both samples all participants were informed about the confidentiality of their responses, and that they had the right not to answer all of the questions. All of them signed an informed consent form. In the same way, permission was requested for audio recording which was only denied on one occasion. In that case, it was agreed to use a field notebook.

Data analysis

During the fieldwork period, all interviews were transcribed. For its subsequent analysis, the qualitative data manager Atlas.ti 8.0. was used.

Limitations

The limitations of the current paper ought to be highlighted. First of all, this paper collects data from different researchers framed in a qualitative research pilot project *Primer la Llar.* For this reason, the data is in dialogue rather than to be contrasted. Although these findings yield useful insights and shed light on an emerging topic as it is professional practice at supported housing, they are not generalizable.

The findings from this study are based on two different researches but linked by a common topic. By doing so, different perspectives, particularly on the domestic and labour sphere, could yield a more complete picture of these dimensions of the HF implementations.

On the other hand, both schedules have undergone modifications due to the teams work singularities and clinical characteristics. In the case of service users, we find more probability of changes due to the factor of voluntariness and the longitudinal character.

Findings

The ethical relationship that is created between professionals and participants is based on the principles of accompaniment indicated by the Housing First philosophy. However, in this article we will focus on more subtle elements that appear during weekly home visits. We refer to the perceptions, feelings and sensations that people identify.

For frontline providers, the day when people enter the apartment was a significant moment. During the search for flats and their subsequent equipment, teams encountered the difficulties of the private rental market in the city of Barcelona. Symbolically, they gave the flat keys to service users materializing the tenure of the apartments. They opened the door the day they moved in.

> We gave them the key to open the door. That this is something that someone started to do and then we all said, 'it could be a good thing to establish'. So, then we said to them 'Here you are, open your house and…' either if you take this one or the other one (FLP).

Social teams highlight this day as a period during which they helped set things up and gave too much information to the person; how the appliances worked, where emergency telephones were, how to get a copy of the keys if they were lost, how the rent had to be paid. Although many more visits were made to clarify, professionals felt concerned about leaving the person alone at home.

For most service users entering into an apartment is experienced as a positive move. In the narratives they said it is the best moment of their lives. After a long time, they have found a place where they can remain and have an opportunity to build their lives. The entrance into the programme allows them to organize themselves again. People can focus on their recovery process. They can reflect on their loss and what they have been deprived of. It's the first step for personal autonomy. Also, the flat is experienced like an indispensable element to live because it gives *dignity*, it gives *normality*. People can *live like human beings*. Tasks as basic as personal grooming, eating, working are possible because there is a place to return to. The flat provides the possibility of having a home, a meaningful space.

> Freedom, my space, my tranquillity, that nobody touches my things (Juan).

However, in different narratives we observe how the service users felt controlled when they began the programme. This perception differs from one service user to another. On one hand, people felt contradictions about their flat, their home and the fact that they have regular visits and calls.

> Is not that bad, but I think that… I can say it without bothering anyone and without anyone taking it to heart. On one hand you have a flat and you have a place to be refugee, to be comfortable, to be well. But, it is not that good to be overcontrolled, for example, they come to see me every week, right? I find that this could happen once a month and it seems like a lot to me (Lourdes).

Some of the elements that reinforce the sense of being controlled are home visits, not agreed calls, steering accompaniments, judgements or the sudden and disproportionate attention offered and received in relation to what they were used to. Before that, the frontline teams remember or repeat what the programme is about.

> Well, is curious because many times, after a while, people ask, 'But… what about the flat?' as saying, 'When will you take it away?' or 'When will you start asking for things?' And sometimes we have to repeat it to clarify temporality, which the conditions are (Frontline provider, FLP).

The times marked by the professionals make them feel anxious and stressed. Service users said they have to be available for professionals.

> Then, I arrive at my house on… Thursday maybe, on Friday they call to tell me they will come to visit me. Or on Thursday they call to tell me 'tomorrow we'll come to see you', for me it is very oppressive, it is very stressful because I have already seen a lot of people, I went to many resources, and what I need is let me be a little bit free. You are overwhelming me; I mean I am overwhelmed (Lourdes).

Initially, the frontline teams did not think they were generating this sense of control because. Building a strong relationship outside the walls of the homelessness agencies made the attention close to an outreach practice.

> And in fact, we had experiences to think that… we did not think there was a sense of control… and in a moment we realized that we were wrong, that there was that feeling, right? (FLP).

They could verify this through elements that they were observing. The most outstanding example was related to cleanliness.

> It's true, every time we went, they told us, 'Look how clean I have the flat, right?' and you're taking it a bit like this, 'Oh no! He wants to please us, doesn't he?' But of course, that moment It's "look how clean I have the flat but the day before It's 'I have to go home to clean the flat because tomorrow they will come, won't they?' and that is no longer so… so easy or so nice? (FLP).

In this sense, we see how people perceive that their home has to be clean and perfect so there is no reprisal. This corresponds to what is expressed in the service users' narratives. The pressure they felt was not the result of direct feedback, but of more subtle elements such as looks or gestures.

> Of course, I must clean the house. I clean it, I clean it. But maybe one day I will not and if it happens the day they come, boom! you must clean it, because they're going to look here and there. A little overwhelmed (…) because you see them looking at you, at the house… they don't do it so shamelessly, but you can see them watching it (Ramón).

As months go by, frontline providers understand how their body plays a central role in the evolution of the ethical-relationship established in the accompaniments.

> Maybe spoken, but also as a performative way: not only has it been spoken, but we have also changed. Precisely the actions that I do express my role, implicitly, because there is an intention there (FLP).

The irrational part of an acting body offers information to the others about what is not said. Therefore, frontline providers become aware of the importance of their body during their praxis.

> Before we knew it, and now… well, I think we believe more in it (FLP).

But over time and with trust people feel more comfortable about expressing their feelings

> Lastly, they told us! They told us! 'I feel you are controlling me' But… controlling what? […] But it is that you come home, right? Then it's clear that going home is an element of control. 'You come home; neighbours find out you come to me. Who are you?' and that's why they saw us as a control element. Telephone calls are also a control element (FLP).

Narratives show the difficulty of feeling the home as their own, especially in this initial climate of distrust and control of the first months of implementation. We see that element as a consequence of not being the rental contract holder. It must be said that, at *Primer la Llar* pilot programme, the rent contract has been signed by the social entities, consequently, service users experience a loss of control and autonomy. This is clearly shown in one of the life stories when the service user has problems registering at the Municipal Council.

> I went there, and he told me that this paper was not valid, I should go with the owner. On Friday I must talk to the owner, to see who the owner is (Youssef).

On the other hand, we notice how service users live an uncertainty linked to temporality. We observed some unresolved issues. Hence, is it possible to feel the house as your own?

> I don't know how to explain it. It's not to offend anyone, but when I come here, I told them… they told me 'this is your house', and I told them this is a house that I have borrowed, until the time you want, because I don't know what will happen in three years (Maria).

Regarding the apartments' furnishing, there was no space or time for each service user to choose the furniture and/or the domestic utensils. The flats were delivered with basic furniture to enable them to move in and live there. Except for those who already had furniture and met the conditions established by the programme, all were furnished and decorated in the same way. The same furniture, the same chairs, the same television, the same sofa. This implies a flats' homogenization, and triggers, in some way, feelings of institutionalization.

> Yes, when I entered it was all ready. I have been in some other flats, in a friend's house and it also has a table… But usually they buy the same television for the people, the same sofa… because my friend, whom I sometimes visit, has another table, because you can see that the flat already had that table, but he has the same sofa, the same wardrobe, the same bed (Manuel).

For this reason, service users seek to personalize their home placement to feel comfortable in the environment

> I had that [bed], then I moved in here and I bought myself this closet with the small table; Anyway, every time they give me something else, I put it there (Manuel).

This element allows them to control the space, to feel it *more their own*. They have also incorporated objects that they kept over the years. These objects (photographs, dolls, diplomas, etc.) are elements that allowed them to reconnect with past *happy* moments, of those which *showed themselves proudly*, which reconnected them with their past identity.

Otherwise, different narratives showed how they were returning furniture that did not suit their needs.

> I: So, there are things that were here that you have not used…
>
> A: I returned them in case someone else needed them (Ahmed).

The professionals are the ones who design the houses. This means that both furniture distribution and the uses are established by frontline providers. As a result, sometimes, this conception was not adapted to the functions and preferences

given by people. Personalization of service users' flats was seen, and it is influenced by the experiences previously lived. Frontline providers design flats so people feel welcome. They only consider special needs as something relevant.

After entering the flat, the well-known effect called "*le choc des quatre murs"* occurs (Hurtubise and Rose, 2013; Lo Sardo, 2016). As months go by, this feeling of control disappears as well as service users' fears relative to the programme. They move towards their flat appropriation. That can be seen in the decoration.

> Now I'm going to make it totally to my taste. When I started painting I said, 'now it's already mine'. Because at first, I said: 'Why am I going to start painting?' With just what I had, I had enough. I had the roof and four… But then, when I started saying 'now it's mine. Now, I will paint my house and I will decorate it to my taste' (María José).

Hence, time is a factor that gains value. After going through a period of adaptation, they gain a distension relationship and both parties start to get to know each other. Both frontline providers and service users understood that it is an initial point. On one hand, frontline teams have understood that each person has different needs regarding the space they inhabit. On the other hand, people have adapted to the new inhabited space, from initial fears and worries to security and trust.

The privacy of the space and the way it is occupied will depend on whoever lives in it. The idiosyncrasy of this programme makes meetings happen in *natural* spaces for service users. This positions the teams directly as guests, consequently it is expected that they behave as such.

> The house is cool because it reverses our role. I like this. I like to put myself in a situation like this: I am a guest, and as a guest, I am at home with your permission to occupy your space and use your things, and to receive the tea you serve me. From there I can also establish a relationship of support, if the occasion is given and I am required (FLP).

The visits, always contextualized in daily life, imply a use of several spaces that go from the public to the private, from the formal to the informal. To maintain a good relationship from which to be able to accompany horizontally, they must respect, ask for permission and wait. From there, we observe a greater proximity in the relationship. Service users open the doors of their houses and invite frontline providers to share the daily life of the domestic sphere.

> The other day he was here, they were here having lunch, because I invited them… (Fermín).

> They told me, they wanted to come and eat, to prepare them a meal. 'Whenever you want, no problem'. I will go to the kitchen… (Cristobal).

Discussion

The main goal of this paper is to analyse an arising ethical relationship at the HF programme flats. This philosophy invites frontline providers to move towards deinstitutionalization. Due to years using the staircase system, the service users begin a moral career (Goffman, 2012b) and assume a stigma as discredited persons (Goffman, 2012a). Therefore, and *a priori*, the HF philosophy mandate is to reverse the process begun with the moral career -located in the third stage called ex-patient. This new scenario involves a direct change in the professionals' role because of the modification of their way of acting.

Consequently, the attention of professionals should replace the beliefs they have about themselves and others. We observed how the lack of clear guidelines on how to act in each situation had placed the teams in an exploratory and experimented work through trial and error. All this means turning the spaces of reflection into learning. Therefore, the clue of the accompaniment is the relationship built between the professional and the service user. This relationship means a shift lever towards a new care model.

As detailed above, this ethical relationship requires horizontality, sincerity, and proximity. Providers' acts, during the meetings lead them to show themselves vulnerable, to ask for forgiveness and not to be responsible for the service users' actions. Besides, they recognize the service user in a positive way displaying their stigmas and sharing them. This sincerity allows a re-reading of themselves.

Service users have a unique life story that mark their way of inhabiting (Illich, 2005; Cuervo, 2008). The residential trajectories before and through the homelessness period as well as the relations between different institutions visited have influenced their vision about how they wanted their home to be.

Regarding the findings of the service users' narratives, the entrance to the apartment supposes to leave aside the dependence of others. In the interviews, they said that they were facing a new life full of opportunities. The analysis shows how service users feel free, like ordinary people. The flat allows them to be far away from any threats and any control. However, despite knowing that there was a signed contract in which they should accept visits and contact with the teams, there were people who felt controlled and monitored. Control from institutions has frustrated their identity (Goffman, 2012a). We see this reflected in how people feel controlled or refer to the homogenization of homes. People are more sensitive in their emotions.

Frontline providers work in a subjective time, particular according to each service user. Moreover, they find out that service users will never fulfil professional expectations. The established relationship has served as an eye opener for providers. The

service user “is not a built object but a subject under construction” (Meirieu, 1998, p.73) and from that enunciation place they ask its place in the world, overcomes their deteriorated identity and claims.

During the home adaptation process, we can see the realignment between how they imagine the new life and what it has been in reality (Lo Sardo, 2016). So, they arrive at the flat thinking about what their life will be like, but when they enter, elements arise to which they did not attach such importance, for example, visits or calls. People focus their efforts on demonstrating their capacity to maintaining a home. This effort connects them to their moral career but also a life concept adjusted to the socially established normalcy. Findings showed up how people are afraid of frontline providers reactions. They become overwhelmed when they think that professionals can see socially unacceptable things in their homes. Therefore, we have to keep in mind that the meaning of the home and how space is inhabited is socially constructed. As the literature indicates, there are ideals around what the home and life should be. Commercial images that show different ideal homes, provided examples (Rybczynski, 1989). These influence people’s vision of how the domestic ideal should be.

To conclude, the home, despite being an intervention scenario, is also a private space. Privacy limits the external and the internal. Despite the contract, visits are established at home, which turn providers into a stranger. This scenario means that they are invited to enter the intimate and private space of the service users. During frontline provider visits, a negotiation takes place around privacy. According to Somerville (1997), the limits of privacy can be physically clear, but control over limits is in constant negotiation.

In this case, service users explicitly know how providers exercise some control mechanisms over them. Therefore, the professionals recognize it and try to transform this exercise into a “non-control”. This fact positions both parties as excluded and excluding (Basaglia, 1970) walking towards a raising of the *awakening of critical consciousness* in terms of Paulo Freire’s work (Freire, 2005).

Lessons to be Learned for Other Housing First Projects

Therefore, some of the learning to consider in programmes of these characteristics are the following:

- Social care teams should consider how experiencing revolving-door for years had disappointed service users and made them distrust frontline providers. Social teams should not be offended and become aware that they embody a control figure. This is not because of them but as the result of a system of

attention that has let them down. It is important to deconstruct the professional role and transform it into an *accompanying guide* (Davidson *et al.*, 2009). This needs time and self-criticism.

- Housing First introduces two key variables in the accompaniment: time and space. Here is where we begin to build an ethical relationship that includes trust, proximity, recognition of mistakes, asking permission and waiting patiently for demands to arise. From this honesty, the sense of control begins to disappear.
- Three main issues should be considered to allow people to appropriate their space and feel it as their home. On the one hand, to establish an individual rental contract with the owner allows service users to be tenants. On the other hand, it should be them who choose the furniture of their home. It allows frontline providers to strengthen the ethical relationship. Finally, uncertainty related to rental contract length difficult the appropriation. Right to housing doesn't mean in the same house; this issue should be discussed with tenants.

Conclusion

Starting a programme with these characteristics requires courage, desire to learn and question oneself, and, above all, a sense of social justice. These elements are essential and must be recognized. Holding them is useful to face the difficulties that may arise. However, this study presented in an institutionalized environment implies inconsistencies in this sense. The first findings of the qualitative research linked to the pilot project *Primer la Llar* show limitations to progressing to complete deinstitutionalization. This limit is due to the situation of the housing market in Barcelona, as in other European cities, which does not facilitate the assumption of affordable rental or access to public housing. Likewise, we would like to emphasize that non-contributory benefits or assistance do not adapt to the real cost of living in the city, forcing people to inhabit in precarious conditions.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the research group for their support and valuable comments. Also, to Jane Kendrew for her patience at reviewing. We would also like to make a special mention to the service users and professionals who have shared their experiences with us. Without them, the study would not have been possible. Finally, we thank Barcelona City Council for supporting research related to the implementation of new social programmes.

References

Angus, J., Kontos, P., Dyck, I., McKeever, P. and Poland, B. (2005) The Personal Significance of Home: Habitus and the Experience of Receiving Long-Term Home Care, *Sociology of Health and Illness* 27(2) pp.161-187.

Bachiller, S. (2008) *Exclusión Social, Desafiliación y Usos del Espacio. Una etnografía con Personas Sin Hogar en Madrid* [Social Exclusion, Disenrollment and Uses of Space. An Ethnography with Homeless People in Madrid] (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid).

Barbier, J.M. (1999) *Prácticas de formación. Evaluación y análisis* [Training Practices Evaluation and Analysis] (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Novedades Educativas).

Basaglia, F. (1970) La institución de la violencia. In *La institución negada. Informe de un hospital psiquiátrico* [The Denial of the Institution. Report of a Psychiatric Hospital], pp.129-169. (Buenos: Barral).

Bertaux, D. (2005) *Los relatos de vida. Perspectiva etnosociológica* [Life Stories. Ethnosociological Perspective] (Barcelona: Ediciones Bellaterra).

Borg, M., Sells, D., Topor, A., Mezzina, R., Marin, I. and Davidson, L. (2005) What Makes a House a Home: The Role of Material Resources in Recovery from Severe Mental Illness, *American Journal of Psychiatric Rehabilitation* 8(3) pp.243-256.

Busch-Geertsema, V. (2013) *Housing First Europe. Final Report, European Experiences with the Housing First Approach* (July) 1-18. Retrieved from www.socialstyrelsen.dk/housingfirsteurope.

Buxant, C., Brosius, C., Lelubre, M., Liagre, R. and Lo Sardo, S. (2016) *Osons le Housing First! Manuel de recommandations pour les opérateurs de terrain* [Guidance Manual for Field Operators] (Brussels: Housing First Belgium).

Cortés Alcalá, L. (1995) *La cuestión residencial: bases para una sociología del habitar* [The Residential Issue: Basis for a Sociology of Living] (Madrid: Editorial Fundamentos).

Cuervo, J.J. (2008) Habitar: Una condición exclusivamente humana [Inhabit: An Exclusively Human Condition], *Iconofacto* 43-51.

Davidson, L., Tondora, J., Staeheli Lawless, M., O'Connell, M. J. and Rowe, M. (2009) *A Practical Guide to Recovery-oriented Practice* (New York: Oxford).

Delory-Momberger, C. (2014) Experiencia y formación. Biografización, biograficidad y heterobiografia [Experience and Training Biography, Biograficity and Heterobiography], *Revista Mexicana de Investigación Educativa* 19(62) pp.695-710.

Desgagné, S. (2005) *Récits exemplaires de pratique enseignante. Analyse typologique* [Exemplary Stories of Teaching Practice. Typological Analysis] (Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec).

Després, C. (1991) The Meaning of Home: Literature Review and Directions for Future Research and Theoretical Development, *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 8(2) pp.96-115.

Dorvil, H. and Boucher-Guèvremont, S. (2013) *Le logement comme facteur d'intégration sociale pour les personnes itinérantes aux prises avec des problèmes de santé mentale participant au Projet Chez Soi à Montréal* [Housing as a Factor of Social Integration for Homeless People with Mental Health Problems Participating in Projet Chez Soi in Montreal] (University du Québec à Montréal).

Dupuis, A. and Thorns, D. C. (1998) Home, Home Ownership and the Search for Ontological Security, *Sociological Review* 46(1) pp.24-47.

Everett, B. and Nelson, A. (1992) We're Not Cases and You're Not Managers: An Account of a Client— Professional Partnership Developed in Response to the "Borderline" Diagnosis Homeward Projects and Case Management, *Psychosocial Rehabilitation Journal* 15(4) pp.49-60.

Fontaine, A. (2010) Le travail de rue dans l'univers de la rue [Street Work in the Street World], *Criminologie* 43(1) pp.137-153.

Fortea, C. and Herruz, L. (2017) Primer la Llar: aplicación del modelo Housing First en la ciudad de Barcelona. Primeras reflexiones [Primer la Llar: Application of the Housing First Model in the City of Barcelona. First Reflections], *Zerbitzuan* 64.

Foucault, M. (2007) El sujeto y el poder [The Subject and Power], *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 50(3) pp.3-20.

Freire, P. (2005) *Pedagogía del oprimido* [Pedagogy of the Oppressed] (Buenos Aires: Siglo veintiuno editores).

García Luque, O. (2016) *Exclusión social y residencial: medición y análisis* [Social and Residential Exclusion: Measurement and Analysis] (Universidad de Murcia. Murcia).

Garneau, S. and Namian, D. (2017) *Erving Goffman et le travail social* [Erving Goffman and Social Work] (Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa).

Gesmond, T., Laval, C., Mantovani, J., Moreau, D. and Rhenter, P. (2016) *Le programme expérimental «UN CHEZ-SOI D ' ABORD». Abrégé du rapport final du volet qualitatif de recherche* [The Experimental Program "UN CHEZ-SOI D' ABORD". Rapport Final of the Qualitative Qualification of Recherche] (France).

Goffman, E. (1991) El orden social y la interacción. In *Los momentos y sus hombres* [Social Order and Interaction. The Man and his Work], pp. 91-98. (Barcelona: Paidós comunicación).

Goffman, E. (2012a) *Estigma. La identidad deteriorada* [Stigma. Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity] (Barcelona: Amorrortu).

Goffman, E. (2012b) *Internados. Ensayos sobre la situación social de los enfermos mentales* [Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates] (Buenos Aires: Amorrortu).

Goffman, E. (2017) *La presentación de la persona en la vida cotidiana* [The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life] (Buenos Aires: Amorrortu).

Gómez-Esteban, J.H. (2012) Pedagogía de la metamorfosis [Metamorphosis Pedagogy], *Magis, Revista Internacional de Investigación En Educación* 4(9) pp.725-740.

Guignon, S. and Morrissette, J. (2006) Quand les acteurs mettent en mots leur expérience [When Actors Put in Words their Experience], *Recherches Qualitatives* 26(2) pp.19-36.

Hurtubise, R. and Rose, M. (2013) *Cahier des récits de pratique d'intervention en itinérance* [Handbook of Stories of Homelessness Practice] (Montréal).

Illich, I. (2005) *El mensaje de la choza de Gandhi y otros textos*. *Colección clásicos de la resistencia civil* [The Message of Gandhi's Hut and Other Texts. Classic Civil Resistance Collection] (Vols. 29/30) (Morelos: Universidad Autónoma de Estado de Morelos).

King, P. (2004) *Private Dwelling. Contemplating the Use of Housing* (New York: Routledge).

Kirsh, B., Gewurthz, R., Bakewell, R., Singer, B., Badsha, M. and Giles, N. (2009) *Critical Characteristics of Supported Housing: Findings from the Literature, Residents and Service Providers Critical Characteristics of Supported Housing: Findings from the Literature, Residents and Service Providers Advanced Grants.* (Canadian Mental Health Association) (August).

Leith, K. H. (2006) "Home is Where the Heart is… Or is it?". A Phenomenological Exploration of the Meaning of Home for Older Women in Congregate Housing, *Journal of Aging Studies* 20(4) pp.317-333.

Lelubre, M. (2013) *Un logement pour les sans-abri?* [Housing for the Homeless?] (Marcinelle: Editions du Bassons).

Llobet, M. and Aguilar, M. (2016) El Housing First. El dret a l'habitatge dels més vulnerables [The Housing First. The Right to Housing for the Most Vulnerable], *Barcelona Societat* 20 pp.16-32.

Lo Sardo, S. (2016) *Sorties de rue. Une ethnographie des pratiques d'intervention Housing First* [An Ethnography of Housing First Intervention Practices] (Brussels).

Ly, A. and Latimer, E. (2015) Housing First Impact on Costs and Associated Cost Offsets: A Review of the Literature, *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* 60(11) pp.475-487.

Magnusson, A. and Lützén, K. (1999) Intrusion into Patient Privacy: a Moral Concern in the Home Care of Persons with Chronic Mental Illness, *Nursing Ethics* 6(5).

Matus, T. (2016) Vincular en tiempos de crisis? Aportes de los enfoques contemporáneos en trabajo social a una crítica de lo relacional [Link in Times of Crisis? Contributions of ContemporaryAapproaches in Social Work to a Critique of the Relational], in: C. Guinot and A. Ferran (Eds) *Trabajo Social: arte para generar vínculos* (pp.13-36). Deusto: Universidad de Deusto.

Meirieu, P. (1998) *Frankenstein educador* [Frankenstein Educator] (Barcelona: Editorial Laertes).

Nelson, G., Macnaughton, E. and Goering, P. (2015) What Qualitative Research Can Contribute to a Randomized Controlled Trial of a Complex Community Intervention, *Contemporary Clinical Trials* 45 (Part b) pp.377-384.

Padgett, D. (2007) There's No Place Like Home: Ontological Security Among Persons with Serious Mental Illness in the United States, *Social Science and Medicine* 64(9) pp.1925-1936.

Parsell, C. (2016) Surveillance in Supportive Housing: Intrusion or Autonomy? *Urban Studies* 53(15) pp.3189-3205.

PHF (2018) *Pathways Housing First.* Retrieved March 14, 2013, from https://www.pathwayshousingfirst.org/

Planella, J. (2016) *Acompañamiento social* [Social Accompaniment] (Barcelona: UOC).

Pleace, N. (2016) *Housing First Guide Europe* (Brussels: FEANTSA).

Rhenter, P. (2013) Vers un chez-soi. L'accompagnement de personnes sans abri ayant des troubles psychiques [Towards a Home, Accompanying Homeless People with Mental Disorders], *Le Sociographe* 2(42) pp.59-66.

Rybczynski, W. (1989) *La Casa: historia de una idea* [The House: Story of an Idea] (Madrid: Nerea).

Sáenz, J. D. (2008) Temas de reflexión en la intervención social [Topics for Reflection in Social Intervention], *Revista CS* 1 pp.189-215.

Sahlin, I. (2005) The Staircase of Transition, *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research* 18(2) pp.115-136.

Sims, R., Medd, W., Mort, M. and Twigger-Ross, C. (2009) When a "Home" Becomes a "House": Care and Caring in the Flood Recovery Process, *Space and Culture* 12(3) pp.303-316.

Somerville, P. (1997) The Social Construction of Home, *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 14(3) pp.226-245.

Stefancic, A., Tsemberis, S., Messeri, P., Drake, R. and Goering, P. (2013) The Pathways Housing First Fidelity Scale for Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities, *American Journal of Psychiatric Rehabilitation* 16(4) pp.240-261.

Stergiopoulos, V., Hwang, S. W., Gozdzik, A., Nisenbaum, R., Latimer, E., Rabouin, D.,… Goering, P. N. (2015) Effect of Scattered-site Housing Using Rent Supplements and Intensive Case Management on Housing Stability among Homeless Adults with Mental Illness: A Randomized Trial, *JAMA – Journal of the American Medical Association* 313(9) pp.905-915.

Strauss, J. S. and Davidson, L. (1997) Mental Disorder, Work and Choice, in: R.J. Bonnie and J. Monahan (Eds) *Mental Disorder, Work Disability, and the Law*, pp.159-163. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

Sylvestre, J., Ollenberg, M. and Trainor, J. (2014) A Model of Housing Stability for People with Serious Mental Illness, *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health* 28(1) pp.195-207.

White, C. M. (2013) *Recovery as a Guide for Environmental Enhancement in Group Homes for People with a Mental Illness: A Social-Ecological Approach*. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Zuñiga, R. (2006) *La evaluación en la acción social. autonomías y solidaridades* [The Evaluation in Social Action. Autonomies and Solidarity] (Montréal: Universidad de Montréal).

Think Pieces

Part B

Zero Flat: The Design of a New Type of Apartment for Chronically Homeless People

Daniel Cid, Francesc Pla and Eva Serrats

Winchester School of Art – University of Southampton, UK
Leve Projects, Barcelona
Leve Projects, Barcelona

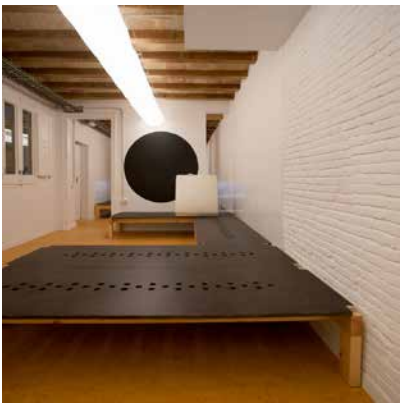
Abstract_ *Zero Flat is a new type of apartment for chronically homeless persons with difficulties adapting to any other housing resource due to the high degree of their social exclusion. Combining the characteristics of a night shelter with the minimal requirements for sleeping rough as well as the warmth of a home, this new space proposes new ways of living that respond to the real needs of long-term homeless people. Situated in the historical city centre of Barcelona in a municipally owned apartment, Zero Flat began as a design project developed with the intention of providing Arrels Fundació, a non-governmental organisation that assists homeless persons, with useful input. During the first year of operation, after its launch in January 2017, more than 74% of Zero Flat's users were able to improve their situation and move on to another apartment or residence for the elderly. This paper reviews the design process and the results of this collaborative project.*

Keywords_ *Chronic homelessness, street, housing, low demand, design, collaborative projects*

ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online

Introduction

Zero Flat (see Figures 1-4) is a new type of apartment for chronically homeless persons who, after many failed attempts to climb the "staircase of life", surrender and lie down on the lowest step: the sidewalk. It is a low demand apartment intended for persons with difficulty accepting the common, basic cohabitation rules of most homeless shelters: no alcohol, no smoking, no pets, and no shopping trolley. Although named Zero Flat from the very start, on many occasions Arrels staff would refer to it more informally as the "street flat". It was considered from the outset as a pilot project for testing possible solutions for chronically homeless persons in the context of Barcelona, where in 2019 the number of people living in public, outdoor spaces was 1195 according to the latest Arrels Census.



Figures 1-2: Agora, Figure 3: Sleeping area, Figure 4: Terrace (photos Serrats)

The project was collaborative, bringing together a non-profit organisation (Arrels), companies and experts from the construction sector (AIA, Isolana, Frobo, Lamp, Gabarró, Wisa Plywood, PCL, DecoInnova, Foampsa, Bruc Jardí, Schüco and Persiana Barcelona), and a design team comprised of architects and researchers (Leve Projects, Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton) to explore the intersection of innovation and social policy. Experts in assisting homeless people and Arrels volunteers contributed to the project with their experience-based knowledge, while engineers and construction sector companies contributed technical knowledge, expertise and funds.

Remarkably, Arrels was open to the possibility of not achieving the desired results. The project was conceived as an experiment, with failure contemplated as a possible outcome, something perhaps associated with any innovation process (Manzini, 2015, pp.161-162). Despite lacking experience with this kind of design research, Arrels was able to collaborate in this social design experiment thanks to its broad vision and its capacity for teamwork. The responsibility of the design team was to share, listen, detect and interpret, producing drawings merely to visualize ideas arising in the communal work process.

This paper explains how this project was born, how the research process unfolded, and how the results of this research became an innovative programme that finally lead to a real prototype that has now been in operation for more than a year. Although this text focuses on design processes, the authors of this text consider it highly pertinent to present the results of this practice-based research in a journal that stands as a reference in the field of homelessness studies. They want to contribute toward a better understanding of the value of design research in social projects and the importance of establishing spaces of experimentation, as well as to promote critical reflection about this innovative project for homeless people.

Starting Point

Prior the Zero Flat project was formulated, the design team decided to propose to the Elisava's Interior Architecture students the challenge of working on a workshop about Arrels apartments for people who have decided to leave the street. This speculative act of academic experimentation led to a mutual exploration between social work and design that was fundamental to building trust and encouraging further possibilities for a professional collaboration. Indeed, it was through this mutual recognition that Arrels director Ferran Busquets came up with the idea of introducing the variable of design research to the development of a new, real project

for homeless persons with difficulty adapting to highly structured environments; a project that would be realized in a municipally owned dwelling situated on the second floor of a typical building on Barcelona's Carrer del Carme 84.

Fundamentally, the idea was to create a spatially sensitive apartment that would impose few restrictions upon occupants. It is known among Arrels workers and volunteers that in many cases, people sleeping rough perceive hostels or shelters as overly regulated, restrictive institutions. Studies of unsheltered homelessness also confirm that people residing on the streets are unlikely to access services located in a shelter that stipulates sobriety or that lacks basic facilities for pets (Burn, 1992; Larsen *et al*., 2004; Cloke *et al.*, 2010, pp.69-72; Farrell, 2010; Donley and Wright, 2012). Farrell (2010) points out the paradox whereby the routinization of homelessness is often precisely what makes ending it difficult, despite every wish to do so. According to the author, solutions for chronically homeless people depend primarily on the establishment of a therapeutic relationship, but also on the availability of "low-demand" housing support. In this sense, says Farrell, despite the success of strategies like the Housing First model, it cannot be expected that all chronically homeless persons will accept available housing because unconscious conflict can be a barrier to successful housing placement. It is useful to mention, in this regard, the example of Safe Harbour, a "low barrier" emergency shelter in Ontario, Canada (Evans, 2011). Situated on the margins of the care system, this space provides an alternative form of community for marginalised people an "inclusive-exclusion" space (Evans, 2011.p.31).

As a first step toward breaking the closed circle caused by long-term familiarity with being dispossessed, the Arrels team recognized clearly the necessity of easing regulations, as well as distancing users from the kinds of environments that have a "markedly homeless identity" (Perry, 2012, p.433; see also Wasserman and Clair, 2010). The aim was to provide support and attention in an environment that distances itself from the "powerful affective atmosphere" that characterises most places of support, where a series of very characteristic elements –the ritual of queuing, noises, smells or anonymous encounters– produces and reinforces "the experience of feeling homeless" (Lancione, 2016, pp.155-158). The initial decision to locate Zero Flat in a context of domesticity –a 90m^2 apartment accessed by a stairway or elevator– already distanced it from being associated with a night shelter where large spaces, often on a ground floor, serve as many people as possible. At this stage, the challenge was to design a versatile but also warm and welcoming apartment; a kind of night shelter without a sterile or cold appearance. It had to be different, both in its design and in its ability to propose new forms of everyday life, since homeless people, after all, deserve good interior design as much as anyone else. In this respect, it is worth mentioning the research undertaken by Davis (2004) about designing housing for homeless persons in the United States. He argues that

the *design* of housing is as important in addressing the problem of homelessness as the overall programme and its strategy. That is, an attractive built environment preserves and promotes dignity, respect and inclusiveness (see also Pable, 2015, p.281; Petrovich *et al.*, 2017). At this point, it is important to note that the capability of social organisations to counter homelessness through high-quality interior designs is very difficult due to funding constraints (Johnsen *et al.*, 2005). It was therefore important for this project to involve building sector partners that would contribute technical knowledge and financial support from the earliest stages of the design process.

In short, the idea was to create a flat for homeless persons who do not adapt well to other types of housing due to their consolidated, high degree of social exclusion. A low demand apartment located in a central neighbourhood, able to accommodate about ten persons along with two volunteers who keep them company and ensure that nights in the flat would be as peaceful as possible. This sleeping area would be open from 9pm to early morning, but with unlimited length of stay.

Combined Actions

The research process consisted of a series of combined actions overlapping in time, during which phenomenological approaches or observations of the context were combined with listening and learning from Arrels' experience, and in which findings from this process were contrasted and compared.

Understanding the problem of homelessness from the perspective of Arrels was a key point. As this institution itself recognises, homeless people provide knowledge through their experience and critical viewpoint. Their team of volunteers therefore enables bonds to be made with highly vulnerable people, while professionals contribute technical skills to ensure continuity of process. Little by little, trustful relationships are created, and needs are identified. Arrels' approach, far from an attitude of philanthropy or even rehabilitation, emphasizes the value of empowerment (Waters, 1992), providing support and resources to facilitate a process of transition from the street to a home. However, the decision to stop living on the street is taken exclusively by homeless persons themselves, never for the satisfaction or peace of mind of Arrels staff. Arrels has multiple spaces of attention in the city –a drop in centre, a residence, shared flats and an occupational workshop– where the daily life of homeless persons participating in their programme takes place. These are places where the emotional situation of being homeless person is in synchronicity with the concerns of professionals and volunteers who respond to the real needs of the homeless people (Cloke *et al.*, 2010, pp.40-41, 91). This form of collaborative ethical praxis, as opposed to more one-sided relationships,

informed the Zero Flat project from the beginning. In fact, if the chronically homeless person didn't adapt to an existing living situation, it would be necessary to make sure that the project responded positively to the emotional and practical reality in which the fact of sleeping rough is circumscribed. That is, the key to their inclusion would be found where their exclusion developed.

As professionals related to the world of design and architecture, the design team was aware of contemporary debates about inhabitation, even contributing to them (Cid and Sala, 2012). The idea of private space has been omnipresent throughout the second half of the 20th century, with contributions made by authors as varied as de Certeau and Girard (1994, pp.205-210), Bachelard (1969) in *The Poetics of Space,* or Perec (1997) in *Species of Spaces*. In general terms, there is a point upon which everyone seems to agree: that inhabiting is not an issue of interiority versus exteriority as much as what kind of transition or what type of relationship the inhabitant establishes between interiority and exteriority. The way people inhabit the world unfolds in a continuous movement from one space to another. In other words, it happens on a journey through intimacy, privacy, the communal and the public. It is in this transition from one point to another where dwellers create their personal territory, an individual space built day by day, an environment in which things are arranged *comme il faut* thanks to the repetition of the same familiar actions. It is in this idea of the interior where the intimacy is built, something that is not related to property or possession but rather to shelter or refuge. As the Catalan philosopher Esquirol (2015, p.45) explains in his book about intimate resistance, this is the circumstance that allows the person to retreat and not be lost or dispersed.

But how does the "intimacy" of someone sleeping rough unfold? Those who have been deprived of the emotional, cultural and familiar aspects of a home lack an interior space where the essential, highly intimate bodily functions of sleeping, washing, having sex, urinating and defecating can be performed (Kohn, 2004, p.132). In the case of the homeless person it develops out of doors and in the open, yet it is invisible, which doesn't mean, however, that it doesn't follow specific codes. Codes are dispersed in everyday practices, and explains Lancione (2013, p.239, 240) in his essay about living on the streets, as evident as it sounds, homelessness is co-constituted with the urban fabric (see also Lancione, 2016, pp.157-158). For this reason, the work carried out by Barcelona artist Miquel Fuster was considered fundamental. Through a drawing that falls into a mesh of nervous lines that obscure everything, he reveals the codes of a dispossessed intimacy and unperceived topographies that constituted his everyday life when he was sleeping rough. Fuster was an active comic illustrator in the 1960s and 1970s who ended up on the streets for fifteen years until Arrels helped him move on, and recently he published a book about his life, illustrated with compelling drawings. In the story of his life as a homeless person, certain types of street furniture often come up at dusk, like a

bench, a streetlight or a drinking fountain; a misplaced experience that occurs in the open, continuous transitions of appropriating and re-appropriating public space. This image (Figure 5) is highly significant; in it, a group of people is seen gathered at night but apart, sharing the glow of streetlights in a square, an in-between zone. Thus, the intention of the project was to transform this memory of a permanent exterior –street benches and non-places such as ATMs, train stations or passageways– into a place for sleeping comfortably.

Figure 5: Miquel Fuster. Vignette from his book *15 años en la calle* (Chula Ink, 2016)

Parallel to this analysis of the codes of the homeless city, Barcelona's Espai Vincles was also examined. It is an organisation managed by the Daughters of Charity that temporarily accommodates homeless persons in an old ground floor commercial retail unit in the centre of the city. This community aims to establish bonds with people who live and sleep on the street, visiting them every night and accompanying them in their trajectory. This protected space, with rickety beds and worn Formica chairs, is offered as a complimentary place where homeless persons can simply get some rest. They begin to arrive at around eight o'clock in the evening, but before they can enter and choose their bed, they must queue up to chat with volunteers for a few minutes, sharing their experiences and establishing bonds while seated on those worn chairs. This welcome room of Espai Vincles becomes an area of mutual recognition; namely a recognition of the fragility of the other and –as Alba Rico (2016, p.18) expresses on the idea of greetings– a clear affirmation of our vulnerability. Inspired by this experience, as will be seen, the first design

action of Zero Flat was to design a warm, welcoming space for exchanging friendly greetings. A place where small gestures of daily coexistence, like a welcome greeting, become a kind of fulcrum to some extent.

In the above process of embracing the philosophy of Arrels, another important point became apparent; their aim isn't to integrate homeless people into the community because they already form a part of society (Julià, 2013). What they hope to achieve is for the rest of society to accept this fact; that they learn to live with this disturbing reality. Homeless persons must be able to change their outlook and realise that it is possible to make a fresh start, but those persons who have a home must also learn to look at the matter differently. If for homeless people the issue is "not being seen", for people with a key and an address the question is "how should they see or perceive them?". At that point, it became clear that it was important to place Zero Flat in a typical apartment block in a regular community of neighbours, in the centre and not in the marginal spaces of the city, normalising and making visible the invisible. Almost a decade ago, Bosch (2009) was arguing precisely in favour of urban planning as a more sensitive and inclusive praxis; one committed to fighting homelessness through inclusionary housing that, moreover, improves a city's social mix. Zero Flat is intentionally located in the city centre in an ordinary building of flats shared by an ordinary community of neighbours.

Programme

In this process of conceptualising a new type of housing, the design team realised that they needed to rethink their vocabulary and reconfigure the constituent verbs of the act of "zero inhabiting". From street to bed, Flat Zero was both an interior design project as well as an exercise in urban and landscape design. Conceived as a temporary support for helping homeless persons get back on their feet, and the first step in their climb back up the "stair of life", the apartment had to be able to provide the essential features of a house without losing the versatility of a public space. Essential and minimum, the flat had to be urban in character but also welcoming; a new concept toward which the municipally owned flat at Carme 84 had to be adapted. In the process of reflection and exploration, a programme for Zero Flat began to emerge; a programme that defined both the functional requirements of the flat as well as more qualitative considerations having to do with the idea of "zero inhabiting" and the definition of its spaces.

Functional aspects

Zero Flat had to contain a sleeping space for homeless persons and a separate sleeping room for volunteers. It had to be a place integrated with the neighbourhood. It needed to be acoustically insulated to avoid disturbing neighbours and, for

this reason, equipped with an odour absorption system. It had to be adapted for people with reduced mobility; as is well known, living homeless has a significant impact on health. Shopping trolleys and dogs would be permitted, and smoking and drinking alcohol permitted. Finally, it had to be built of resistant materials, obtaining the maximum possible spatial quality within a limited budget.

Immaterial quality of space

It had to be able to create the conditions favourable to spatial appropriation and generating the possibility of intimacy. The final result of this "street flat" should be able to mediate the transitions between exterior and interior.

Spatial definition

The apartment had to contain the following spaces: a welcome area called "Agora" equipped with a kitchenette (this space could also function as a bedroom), a versatile sleeping area for homeless people, a terrace connected to the sleeping area by an entranceway, a bedroom for two volunteers, storage space, and a bathroom accessible to those with disabilities (an exclusive toilet for volunteers was added later).

Manual of Transitions

At this point, in order to start the formalization of the project, the design team decided to draw up a manual of spatial transitions encountered during the journey from street to bed. A kind of user's manual –loosely inspired by the poetical inventory of spaces Georges Perec describes in his book *Species of Spaces*– with a description of uses and possible habits of an inhabitant. More than designing a floor plan by drawing plans and sections, they preferred to begin working on the imaginary production of the spaces and the transitions or thresholds between them. In this prefiguring of this new flat's different moments and possible occurrences, and through a fluent and cooperative process, each of the constituent elements of "zero dwelling" was sequentially established.

Around 9pm – arrival

A volunteer in an ample space, one that provides access to the apartment, welcomes a homeless person (Figures 6-8). Denominated Agora (Figures 1-2), it is an interior plaza equipped with a bench and a water fountain (sink), a place where people can sit down and catch up, a meeting place designed to encourage bonds between volunteers and users of the apartment. This space is equipped with a kitchenette where soup or coffee can be made. At night, it can also serve as an extra space to sleep.



Figures 6-8: Stills from a making-of video about Zero Flat

Welcome pack

In this entrance hall / plaza that is the Agora, the newcomer is provided with a welcome kit consisting of a mattress, a blanket and a portable lantern (Figure 9). This mattress (the white of the bed of Perec) is a critical component of Zero Flat. Designed as a flexible and functional piece that can be easily moved throughout the flat, this foldable and transportable mattress allows the inhabitant to choose between different places to sleep, thereby favouring the idea of appropriation. It is a beginning (welcome pack) and at the same time an end (intimate space) of Zero Flat, incorporating a headboard to enable retreat and optimize intimacy. The portable lantern (a rechargeable camping lamp) permits the inhabitant to move around the flat at night without switching on any lights.

Around 11pm – bedtime

The lights are turned off, and it's time to go to bed. The Agora incorporates a "topography" that extends throughout the sleeping area and reaches the terrace, creating a versatile "landscape" of surfaces upon which to place a mattress and sleep. Benches or tiers (Figure 9), constructed out of phenolic plywood, provide a continuous, flexible and functional structure throughout, enabling different configurations so that the inhabitant can choose a spot that looks comfortable. Phenolic plywood is coated with a dark brown, durable resin, ensuring that every furniture

piece is highly resistant to wear and tear as well as infection. But at the same time, good design is not renounced: wood is visible throughout to create a warm atmosphere, and is of high quality craftsmanship. This more domestic furniture, nobly aging over time, breaks with the idea of furniture that is clinical and uniform.

The bed, together with the headboard of the mattress and the Barcelona shutter (a traditional Barcelonese wooden roller shutter fixed to the exterior of windows and balconies) hanging from the ceiling favours the creation of a cosy nook inside the dwelling (Figure 9). The previously mentioned study by Burn (1992), about environmental control in homeless shelters, suggests that the sense of helplessness and passivity in night refuges increases proportionately with both the rigidity of the rules and the lack of privacy. Since privacy has significant implications upon identity, the project tried to encourage it through small but significant design decisions.

As already mentioned, an antechamber connects the sleeping area with the terrace. This is a covered passageway open to the exterior; an intermediate space that allows, for example, cigarettes to be smoked outdoors but under cover. Past this spacious doorstep lies the terrace, which has benches similar to those in the sleeping area, but made with paving stones. These benches enable sitting and even sleeping outdoors, but within the flat's domain. The terrace is also equipped with a drinking fountain for dogs.

During the night, volunteers have their own space, an easily recognisable traditional bedroom with two "normal" beds.

7am – Wake up, and arrival of the cleaning team

The arrival of the cleaning team marks the end of the journey of Zero Flat as a place to sleep, and allows the apartment to be used again that evening.

9am – 8pm Multi-purpose meeting room

At this point, while discussing the project with Arrels, it was decided to add a second diurnal use to the space, during the hours when Zero Flat is empty. By designing beds that can be turned into tables or seats (Figure 9), Zero Flat converts during the day into a classroom or a multi-purpose meeting room for training volunteers and for educational visits; an idea that enriches the Zero Flat concept (Figures 10-11).

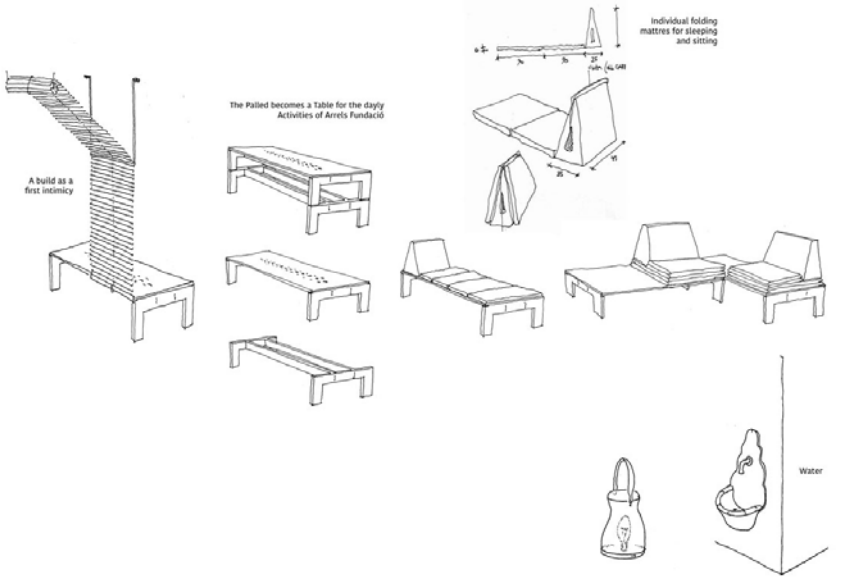
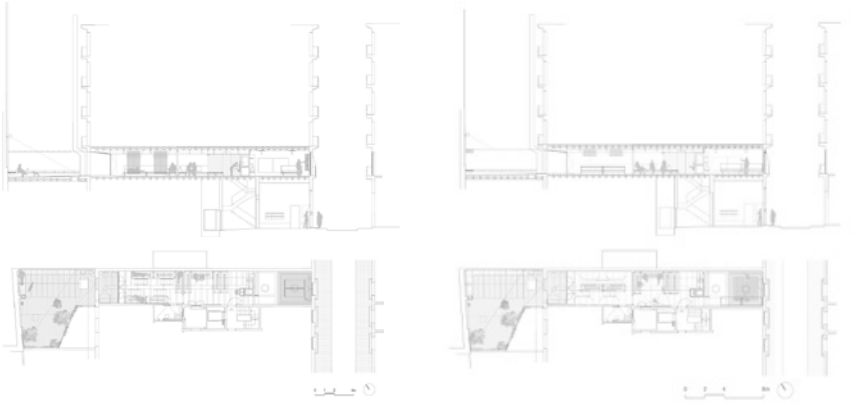


Figure 9: Zero Flat Tools – Barcelona blind, pallet and bench, bench or pallet turned into a table, folding mattress, portable lamp and drinking fountain



Figures 10-11: Nocturnal and diurnal uses of Zero Flat

Resistant Materials, Domestic Interfaces

Early on, the story of Zero Flat began to be shared with the building industry, which brought essential knowledge and creativity to the project. For instance, Forbo provided a flooring system used in hospitals that withstands the daily wear and tear of a healthcare environment, but which also creates a relaxing atmosphere. Gabarró Woods provided phenolic plywood developed by WISA that is commonly used in the

transportation industry. To overcome odours inside Zero Flat, the engineering firm AIA designed an odour-absorbing ventilation system that consists of a long, tubular air duct such as those used in gyms, except here the ducting is made of fabric cloth and doubles as an innovative lighting system (Figures 1-3), a design made possible thanks to the collaboration of the lighting company Lamp. These design solutions express very well the philosophy of Zero Flat: highly sophisticated engineering systems using very resistant materials, but with warm, domestic finishes.

Making Visible

When Zero Flat was still in its draft form, the project was selected to take part in an exhibition titled *Piso Piloto* (meaning "Demo-Home") organised by the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB) and the Museo de Antioquía of Medellín. Rather than showing up with drawings, plans and sections, the design team preferred to explain the apartment's manual of transitions along with an audio-visual animation (Figure 12), a short film describing Zero Flat in the context of its neighbourhood during a twenty-four hour period, for which the Cinema Studios of Catalonia contributed one of the largest studios in the country. The animated video, produced by Leve Projects, a studio of architects and filmmakers, was shot with volunteer actors from Arrels and Elisava over a full-scale floor plan of Zero Flat that was reproduced on the floor of the film studio. It shows the 24-hour life of Zero Flat within an architectural section of the building and street. Motion Graphics students from Elisava put the finishing touches on this video, a truly multidisciplinary audio-visual project.

Figure 12: Still from the audio-visual animation of the 24-hour life of Zero Flat (see credits) Available at: https://vimeo.com/181916892 [accessed 20/11/2019]

Final Reflections

Zero Flat is a pilot project, an experimental model whose design process continues while the facility is in use. The idea of replication, which is to say opening more Zero Flats in other parts of the city, is viewed as a desirable possibility, in which case daytime uses would be determined by the necessities of a given area. If the proximity of the first Zero Flat to the offices of Arrels suggested a space for dissemination and education on the phenomenon of homelessness, in another context other uses would suggest themselves. The main idea is that diurnal uses of new Zero Flats be determined according to the specific needs that the local community might have (adult education facility, cooperative or musicians' practice spaces). Circumstances such as these favour encounters between the world of Arrels and that of a neighbourhood, perhaps even –why not? —encouraging neighbourhood members to participate in the management of a new Zero Flat. At the moment, Arrels is working to open a second apartment like this in Barcelona.

As has already been mentioned, after two years of operation, 74% of Zero Flat users improved their situation (January 2017 to January 2019). During this period, this housing resource accommodated seventy-seven people (sixty-seven men, ten women), four dogs and one cat. During this period, 51 per cent of them moved in a more stable home (individual, shared or assisted flat, rented room or nursing home); 17 per cent of them remained at Zero Flat; three per cent of them went to another night shelter like Espai Vincles.; four per cent of them returned with their families. On the other hand, nine per cent of them did not manage to be linked to Zero Flat and returned to street homelessness. Finally, 17 per cent of them were people forced to leave their home (no chronic homeless people), and Zero Flat acted as a temporary solution. This confirms two significant facts. Firstly, easing regulations of "zero living" enables homeless shelters to provide the inclusive intimacy of an apartment and a bed. Secondly, design matters when it comes to spaces for inhabitation with characteristics such as these. That is, in building a place that provides a welcoming and comfortable retreat that removes some of the stigma and of feeling like a homeless person.

It is in this regard, within the general context of the policy debate on providing support for the homeless people and access to social housing (Fernández Evanelista, 2015; Fernández Evangelista, 2016), that Zero Flat must be appreciated; a debate in which the Housing First model has captured attention and resources precisely because of its capacity to turn problems of homelessness around. But it is important to understand that many of the people who have been living in the street for years would simply never choose to live in a "normal" home even if they had access to one (Farrell, 2010). It would, therefore, be important to dedicate resources toward a reflection upon and action toward the idea of "zero living".

Despite the permanent emergency in which the Arrels non-profit organisation lives, it has been able to introduce the variable of innovation and collaborative work as a tool to improve situations in which many existing models have not been successful, thereby improving the lives of the people who make up their community. At the same time, projects such as these have allowed to our students of Design and Architecture to experience a real learning situation, while companies have equally been able to show the importance of social variables in the contemporary economy. The construction industry has already largely adopted environmental sustainability within its business strategy; the next challenge is the full incorporation of social sustainability.

Complex challenges, as already mentioned, require the encouragement of prospective projects based on collaboration, which is to say a multiplicity of points of view. Some years ago, two of the authors of this article, Eva Serrats and Francesc Pla, organized a conference on cooperative architecture at the Catalan College of Architects (http://www.arquitecturacooperativa.org) [accessed 20/11/2019]; A project that highlighted the importance of sustainable and organic architectural solutions, with less restrictive standards and, therefore, more adapted to new urban needs. At the very least, as the French architects Lacaton and Vassal affirm, building codes should not impose a particular way of life (Kaminer, 2017, p.119). Amid all these discussions, Zero Flat demands that norms be less restrictive in order to attract users who do not adapt easily to existing housing resources. This housing proposal has led to reflect, from the perspective of the street, on the condition of interior space, a space capable of being possessed without being dominated.

Finally, just to mention that before the last local elections were held in Barcelona (May 2019), Arrels Fundació wrote an open letter to the candidates for mayor that included five proposals for the newly elected government. The letter was published nineteen days before the elections on the organisation's website. The second of the proposals was "Less shelters and more low-demand spaces".

"In Barcelona there are three shelters directly open to the homeless, but there's a waiting list of months to get in. On a second tier, there are also specialised centres for homeless people with other issues that can only be accessed by referral from the social services. The shelters are located in outlying areas of the city (to get from the heart of Barcelona, the person has to walk between an hour and an hour and a half) and are also costly: the overnight price for a place is about sixty to seventy euros. Here at Arrels we launched a low-demand space known as Zero Flats two years ago and we've seen that smaller, more flexible spaces located in more central areas of the city are a useful response.

What are we proposing? To open Zero Flats in each neighbourhood of Barcelona so that people sleeping on the street don't have to travel long distances and can safely find a place to spend the night, enter with all their belongings and spend the time they need there. Opening up Zero Flats is also a cheaper option than a place for one night, as they cost twenty euros. The proposal can be carried out in partnership between the local government (providing spaces) and social organisations (managing spaces)".

On June 14th of 2018, Zero Flat was awarded best design project of the year by the ADI Culture Awards, organised by a Spanish non-profit organisation ADI-FAD, the Industrial Design Association linked to FAD, Fostering Arts and Design).

References

Alba Rico, S. (2016) *Penúltimos días (Mercancías, máquinas, hombres)* [Penultimate days (Goods, machines, men)]. (Madrid: Los Libros de la Catarata).

Bachelard, G. (1969 [1964]) *The Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press).

Bosch, J. (2009) How Urban Planning Instruments Can Contribute in the Fight against Homelessness. An International Overview of Inclusionary Housing, *European Journal of Homelessness* 3 pp.155-177.

Burn, S. (1992) Loss of Control, Attributions, and Helplessness in the Homeless, *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 22(15) pp.1161-74.

Cid, D. and Sala, T. (2012) *Casas de la vida. Relatos habitados de la modernidad* [Houses of Life. Inhabited Stories of Modernity]. (Barcelona: Ariel).

Cloke, P., May, J. and Johnsen, S. (2010) *Swept Up Lives? Re-envisioning the Homeless City* (Malden, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell).

Davis, S. (2004) *Designing for the Homeless: Architecture That Works* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press).

De Certeau, M. and Giard, L. (1998 [1994]) Private Spaces, in: M. de Certeau, L. Giard and P. Mayol (Eds.) *The Practice of Everyday Life*, pp.145-148. (Minneapolis MN: University of Minnesota Press).

Donley, A.M. and Wright, J.D. (2012). Safer Outside: A Qualitative Exploration of Homeless People's Resistance to Homeless Shelters, *Journal of Forensic Psychology Practice* 12(4) pp.288-306.

Esquirol, J.M. (2015) *La reistència íntima: assaig d'una filosofia de la proximitat* [Intimate Resistance: Essay of a Philosophy of Proximity]. (Barcelona: Quaderns Crema).

Evans, J. (2011) Exploring the (Bio)political Dimensions of Voluntarism and Care in the City: The Case of a "Bow Barrier" Emergency Shelter, *Health and Place* 17(1) pp.24-32.

Farrell, D.C. (2010) The Paradox of Chronic Homelessness: The Conscious Desire to Leave Homelessness and the Unconscious Familiarity of the Street Life, *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment* 20(2) pp.239-254.

Fernández Evangelista, G. (2015) *El acceso a la vivienda social de las personas sin hogar. Estudio de casos: Alemania, España, Finlandia y Reino Unido* [Access to Social Housing for Homeless People. Case studies: Germany, Spain, Finland and United Kingdom]. (Doctoral thesis, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona).

Fernández Evangelista, G. (2016) Shrinking Social Housing Stocks as a Barrier to the Eradication of Homelessness: The Cases of Germany, Finland, the United Kingdom and Spain, *European Journal of Homelessness* 10(2) pp.151-172.

Johnsen, S., Cloke, P. and May, J. (2005) Day Centres for Homeless People: Spaces of Care or Fear?, *Social and Cultural Geography* 6 (6) pp.787-811.

Julià, M. (2013) Pròleg [Prologue], in: E. Richard *Con Cartones por la Calle* [With Cardboards on the Street], pp.7-10. (Barcelona: Arrels Fundació).

Kaminer, T. (2017) *The Efficacy of Architecture. Political Contestation and Agency* (London, New York: Routledge).

Kohn, M. (2004) *Brave New Neighborhoods. The Privatization of Public Space* (New York and London: Routledge).

Lancione, M. (2013) How is Homelessness?, *European Journal of Homelessness* 7(2) pp.237-248.

Lancione, M. (2016) The City and 'the Homeless': Machinic Subjects, in: H. Frichot, C. Gabrielsson and J. Metzger (Eds.) *Deleuze and the ity*, pp.145-160. (Edinburg: Edinburg University Press).

Larsen, L., Poortinga, E. and Hurdle, D. E. (2004) Sleeping Rough: Exploring the Differences Between Shelter-Using and Non-Shelter-Using Homeless Individuals, *Environment and Behavior* 36(4) pp.578-591.

Pable, J. (2015) Possessions in the Homeless Shelter Experience: The Built Environment's Potential Role in Self-restoration, *Interiors* 4(3) pp.267-294.

Perec, G. and Sturrock, J. (1997) *Species of Space and Other Pieces* (London, England: Penguin Books).

Perry, SL. (2012) Urban Hybrid Space and the Homeless, *Ethnography* 14(4) pp.431-451.

Petrovich, J.C., Murphy, E.R. and Hardin, L.K. and Koch, B.R. (2017) Creating Safe Spaces: Designing Day Shelters for People Experiencing Homelessness, *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless* 26(1) pp.65-72.

Wasserman, J.A. and Clair, J.M. (2010) *At Home on the Street* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner).

Waters, J. (1992) *Community Or Ghetto?: An Analysis of Day Centres for Single Homeless People in England and Wales* (London: Campaign for the Homeless and Rootless).

A Shelter is a Shelter is a Shelter

Response to "Zero Flat. The Design of a New Type of Apartment for Chronically Homeless People"

Volker Busch-Geertsema

GISS, Bremen, Germany

The article on a "new type of apartment for chronically homeless people" describes some interesting innovations in creating shelter spaces for homeless people. The result is a shelter that is smaller than many other shelters (with space for only ten homeless people), has obviously less rules, and you can bring your pets and drinks.

There are a number of positive aspects of this "innovation". Especially the plan is to create a welcoming atmosphere in a place which is centrally located and to take on board the needs and preferences of homeless people when designing the interior part.

However, the presentation of this kind of shelter also raises a number of questions.

- Is this really a feasible alternative to the larger shelters heavily criticized in the article, given the fact, that you would need around a hundred of these shelters (and 200 volunteers "keeping company") to provide temporary accommodation for the more than a thousand people counted on the streets of Barcelona? It is obvious that even with much less reflections about design and the memories of former rough sleepers, almost every kind of provision which would be of such small size would be better equipped to provide a more accepting atmosphere than a large shelter. But you would need many of them to replace the larger shelters.
- The target group is described as "chronically homeless persons with difficulties adapting to any other housing resource due to the high degree of their social exclusion". Who are these persons and how are they selected? It is not explained how this group is chosen out of the more than a thousand people living in public, outdoor spaces of Barcelona on any night. But there are a number of assumptions made about this group. Obviously they prefer benches to normal beds (which are only provided for the two volunteers). Obviously, they want some intimacy and privacy though "they would never choose to live in a 'normal' home

ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online

even if they had access to one". And obviously they are in need to climb a staircase preparing them for the transition toward a "mainstream life" before they can accept to move to a "real" apartment. The authors seem to ignore completely the critical literature about the shortcomings of the so-called "staircase of transition", but – putting it a bit more cynically – rather plea for making the lower step of it more cosy.

- It might also be asked, if a shelter for ten rough sleepers in one room really distances itself profoundly from "the ritual of queuing, noises, smells and anonymous encounters" which is criticised as characterising other types of support for homeless people. Again, the sheer size of it will make it easier to know each other and instead of queuing users may wait in a kind of lobby (the "agora") before they enter the sleeping area. But one might have some doubts about the absence of noise and smell in that area.

The article, with all it's enthusiasm for this "new type of housing" and its capacity "to instil the emotional and cultural aspects of a home" fails to mark the differences between this small shelter and a real home. A real home is a place where you can stay not only at night between 9pm and 7am, but 24/7, where you don´t have to share your sleeping room with nine other people you have not chosen, where you have a real bed and not a bench with a mattress, where you can store your belongings, where you have the key and decide who enters it; and where you don't have to speak to a volunteer every night, before you can go to bed and get some sleep.

Some of the praising of the quality of this shelter is questionable, such as if it would create "conditions favourable to spatial appropriation and the possibility of intimacy", just because the first few people entering the room can choose their preferred bench (and the rest has to accept what is left for them) and you can lower a roller blind in front of your bench.

The "zero flat" remains a shelter, probably a cosier one than many others, but it is and remains a shelter and is far away from what constitutes a real home. In admiring the qualities of this shelter, the article at the same time accepts the notion of long-term homeless people being unable to live in real homes without being "prepared" for it in different types of temporary provisions. It would be interesting to explore the proportion of people having to live on the streets of Barcelona, who would really prefer this type of shelter to a real home, if they would ever have the choice.

Framing the Right to Housing: A Values-Led Approach

Niall Crowley and Rachel Mullen

Values Lab, Dublin, Ireland

Abstract_ *This article explores a unique development from the Irish context in response to high and still growing levels of homelessness and housing insecurity. It is centred around a campaign to introduce a right to housing in the Irish Constitution and/or Irish legislation and the work of the Home for Good coalition in this regard. Specifically, it is concerned with the potential in values-led communication to motivate concern on the issue among the general public and action by them in support of a right to housing. Research was conducted to examine the narratives, and underpinning values, on housing insecurity and homelessness, human rights and the right to housing, and change and how change happens of a target audience for this campaign. This research was to provide the basis for developing the current activist narrative so that campaign messages could be designed that are true to this narrative, resonant with the target audience narratives, and engage values that motivate a concern for the situation and experience of others. The research raises issues that are of general concern for all who seek to communicate on and mobilise a public concern on these issues.*

Keywords_ *Right to housing; values; values-led communication; communication; narratives; engaging values*

ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online

Introduction

Homelessness and housing insecurity in Ireland have reached unprecedented levels with little sign of improvement in sight. These issues are a consequence of a history of inadequate funding for social housing; a dominant value-set that prizes private sector endeavour and individual responsibility; and the depth of economic inequality in society. A range of issues emerge: inadequate levels of social housing construction; limited protection for tenants in the private rented sector; and inadequacy of welfare and support services available to those experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity. In such a context, civil society organisations are increasingly looking to the potential for change in establishing a right to housing through constitutional amendment and/or legislation.

One civil society response to the current crisis has been the establishment of the 'Home for Good' coalition: a network of organisations and individuals with the primary goal to achieve the insertion of a right to housing into the Irish Constitution. The coalition points to the imbalance in current Constitutional provisions, where rights regarding private property are not sufficiently balanced with the Constitutional recognition that these rights need to be reconciled with the requirements of the common good and regulated by the principles of social justice. The absence of Constitutional provision for a right to housing, in this context of imbalance, has inhibited solutions to the current housing and homelessness crisis. Further, the lack of a home acts as a barrier for people to exercise many other human rights.

Home for Good recently commissioned Values Lab to conduct research to collect qualitative data regarding the views of the public on issues surrounding homelessness, housing insecurity, and the right to housing, with a view to informing a future campaign for the introduction of a right to housing. The research project was coordinated and supported by the Simon Communities Ireland on behalf of the coalition.

Values Lab supports and mentors organisations and networks to take a values-led approach to all areas of their work. This includes a particular concern to support organisations to engage and embed values that motivate a concern for the achievement of equality, the accommodation of diversity, and the fulfilment of human rights (Crowley, 2015). Values Lab has pioneered the development and application of tools and resources for organisations and networks, to implement values-led organisational development, strategic communication, and campaign strategies.

This article draws from this small-scale research project. It is about how public demand for the right to housing might be built and a positive response to this demand achieved, and the centrality of values to the effective pursuit of such social change. It first explores the current role of public discourse in advocacy and policy-making on issues of homelessness and housing insecurity, and then provides some

background on the nature and potential of values-led communication in such a context. It then presents the approach taken to the research, the findings, and their implications for future work on strengthening human rights in the areas of homelessness and housing insecurity.

Public Discourse

There is a significant focus on homelessness and housing insecurity in public discourse in Ireland. The scale and nature of the current crisis provides material for an almost continuous coverage of the issue, in mainstream and social media. Public discourse on these issues is built around mainstream media stories of people, particularly families with young children, and vulnerable adults, in extremely difficult situations: sleeping in police stations, in cars, and on the streets; trapped in inadequate emergency accommodation; or living with the threat of homelessness due to spiralling and unsustainable rents in the private rental sector. Another significant strand of this public discourse is built around the regular publication of data on the escalating numbers becoming homelessness and the various reactions to these data.

The current role accorded to public discourse in the strategies being pursued for social change on the issue of homelessness and housing insecurity appears to be limited. The primary role, it would appear, is as a public space for contest between the advocate and the policy-maker, principally for the advocate to challenge the veracity of the homelessness figures and the lack of progress by state actors, and for state actors to defend their record. There is a further role evident for public discourse as a form of publicity in setting out what is being done by the various actors on the issue and seeking support for such action.

Values-led communication suggests a different and more ambitious role for public discourse in strategies to address homelessness and housing insecurity. It poses communication as a key tool for advancing social change, rather than simply as a means to present, defend, or contest information on the issue. It involves an engagement with a wider general public with the particular purpose of mobilising public concern and demand for social change. Such communication places values at the heart of all messages. This is relevant for advocates seeking to advance the right to housing and for policy-makers who require some form of public permission to prioritise investment at the levels required to address the scale of the current crisis.

Values-Led Communication

Values are those deeply held ideals that people consider to be important. They are key in shaping our attitudes and motivating our choices and behaviours. Values are central to any campaign for social change, given their capacity to motivate and, therefore, mobilise people to care about and to take action on social issues. Every campaign message and visual carries a set of values, consciously or unconsciously, that signal to the audience why they should be concerned with the issue in question. Values-led communication consistently and consciously engages audiences with those specific values that motivate a concern for the social change sought.

Research shows that people's personal values operate as part of an interactive values system, containing a range of values with compatible and conflicting motivational goals (Swartz, 1992). Our values can be understood as lying along two pairs of axes with conflicting motivational goals: self-transcendence values versus self-enhancement values; and openness to change values versus conservation values:

- Self-transcendence values encompass what are labelled 'universalism' and 'benevolence' values, such as equality, social justice, helpfulness, compassion and concern for the environment.
- Self-enhancement values encompass what are labelled 'power' and 'achievement' values, such as wealth, social recognition, and power and control over other people and resources.

Self-transcendence values and self-enhancement values have conflicting and incompatible motivational goals: transcending self-interests to consider the welfare of others and the environment in the former, versus the pursuit of some external personal reward, such as social status, power, or wealth in the latter.

- Conservation values[1] encompass what are labelled 'security', 'conformity' and 'tradition' values, such as personal, family and community security and stability, obedience, self-discipline, moderation and respect for tradition.
- Openness to change values encompass what are labelled 'self- direction' values, such as independence, freedom and creativity.

Conservation values and openness to change values have conflicting and incompatible motivational goals: maintaining the status quo in the former versus self-determination and freedom of thought and action in the latter.

---

1 The term 'conservation' here does not refer to 'conservation' as this term is applied to environmental conservation, but pertains to conservative approaches and aversion to change.

Values research, in over eighty countries worldwide, indicates that each of us holds all of these values, and what varies is the priority ranking each individual affords to specific values (Swartz, 1992). Our environment and experiences on a day-to-day basis activate different values we hold, for example through consumer advertising, resulting in a balancing and rebalancing of different values we hold, with activated values getting priority and immediate attention. This process largely happens at an unconscious level. In this process, values are akin to muscles in that the values that are more regularly activated by our environment become stronger and get prioritised.

Research and survey work over decades provides compelling evidence that, in general, more people are motivated by self-transcendence values than by the oppositional self-enhancement values.[2] However, this is not necessarily or often reflected in the directions taken or priorities pursued by any society. This is because, while we may rank self-transcendence values as more important to us generally, on a day-to-day basis our environment is consistently engaging our self-enhancement and conservation values. This happens, in particular, as a result of the values communicated through mainstream and social media, consumer advertising, celebrity culture, and political discourse. In such a context, people give greater priority to pursuing their self-enhancement values, and, in what is referred to as a see-saw effect, their self-transcendence values simultaneously wane in importance.

Our environment is also prone to stimulate people's fears and anxieties, in particular through the content of mainstream and social media and of consumer advertising. This is particularly evident, for example, in coverage of issues surrounding immigration and social exclusion, and is also evident in coverage of issues of homelessness and insecure housing. This has a particular impact on dominant values within society.

Conservation values (in particular security values) and/or self-enhancement values are engaged in such an environment of fear and anxiety. People thus prioritise these values, which has the effect of simultaneously diminishing their more pro-social values (openness-to-change and self-transcendence). The motivational goals associated with these conservation and self-enhancement values are pursued to alleviate the anxieties and fears. These motivational goals include maintenance of the status quo and, thus, can undermine pursuit of the social change being sought in areas such as housing insecurity and homelessness.

---

2 See for example: Each round of the European Social Survey questionnaire includes a twenty-one-item measure of human values, the 'Human Values Scale', designed to classify respondents according to their basic value orientations.

Values-led communication, such as campaign messaging, engages people's emotions much more effectively than fact-based communication. This offers greater potential to mobilise people to care about, and take action on issues of social concern. Research indicates that the self-transcendence values we hold, when engaged and, therefore, prioritised, motivate us to think beyond our own interests to a concern for the welfare of others (Swartz, 2007). This is the foundation stone for values-led communication to advance social change.

The goal in values-led communication, therefore, is to consistently engage audiences with the self-transcendence values that motivate the social change sought, values that audiences already hold, but may not always prioritise for lack of engagement (Mullen, 2018). Values-led communication must do this within a narrative that convinces people that change is possible and not something to be feared. Values-led communication, if sustained at a sufficient level for impact, has a capacity to disrupt dominant narratives that engage self-enhancement values as well as the conservation values engaged through fear and anxiety. This values-led communication unlocks a potential demand for positive social change, rooted in equality and human rights.

Research Project

The research project, commissioned by the Home for Good coalition, identified that the key audience for a campaign to mobilise a public demand for the right to housing was not those who already support such an approach, nor those who are immediately hostile to such an approach. The target audience for such a campaign is that majority of people who are less polarised about the issues surrounding housing insecurity, homelessness, and the right to housing. This is an audience that can hold mixed, often conflicting, views and value priorities in regard to these issues.

The research sought to identify and analyse the key narratives of this target audience across three themes: housing insecurity and homelessness; human rights and the right to housing; and change and how change occurs. It sought to establish the activist narrative across these three themes with a view to mapping the gaps and alignments between the activist narrative, shared by those seeking to lead social change in this area, and those of the target audience. This mapping enables an evolution of the activist narrative to more effectively communicate about, and seek to mobilise a demand for, a right to housing, while remaining true to its own values and analysis.

The research was small in scale. An online survey was designed to elicit the views of respondents on the causal factors for and possible solutions to homelessness and housing insecurity. This was disseminated by means of a snowball technique, to reach beyond the immediate networks of the coalition member organisations. The survey responses were analysed to determine those among the respondents who fell within the target audience and who were willing to participate in focus group discussions. Seventy-two such respondents were identified and contacted, out of whom twenty-nine people agreed to participate in one of the twelve focus group discussions organised, with twenty one people actually participating and eight no-shows.

A brief literature review[3] was used to identify an 'activist narrative', which could be used as a benchmark against which the target audience narratives could be measured: for alignment and gaps. There was an understanding that this 'activist narrative' would need further refinement within the Home for Good coalition after the research project was completed.

Eleven hours of interview material was gathered and analysed to establish the key narratives held by the target audience, across the three themes. These narratives were further analysed to establish the surface frames (words, phrases) employed in the audience narratives and the possible cognitive or mental frames that these surface frames activate (Lakoff, 2014). Cognitive frames are those packages of ideas, values and emotions that we all hold in our subconscious and that enable us to interpret and make sense of the world around us. Cognitive frames are activated by language and images. For example, the word (surface frame) 'home' activates a cognitive frame we hold that has been shaped by our specific experiences, culture, and surroundings. This cognitive frame will contain certain ideas, emotions and values related to our lived experience of the word 'home' that, when activated, imbue this single word with complex meaning.

The analysis of the interview material provides a touchstone for the development of the 'story of change' to underpin a campaign for a right to housing. The 'story of change' encompasses the experience of homelessness and housing insecurity alongside its structural causes; is told using language and visuals that resonate with the target audience; activates or adapts cognitive frames held by this audience so as to engage their self-transcendence values; and remains true to, and is transparently championing the values underpinning the campaign.

---

3 'Making the Case for a Right to Housing in Ireland', published by the Simon Communities in Ireland, June 2018, was the key document examined in examining the activist narrative.

This final step of developing the 'story of change' for the campaign did not form part of the project and is currently in train in the Home for Good coalition. Nonetheless, the research findings even at this early stage not only provide useful information about the audience narratives regarding homelessness and human rights and the issues that require careful consideration in shaping a campaign narrative on the right to housing, but could also inform future communications, by the various stakeholders, of a more general nature on the issue.

Principle Research Findings: Activist Narrative

The key activist narrative on homelessness and housing insecurity, titled "Victims of Dysfunction" by the researchers, is one of a significant and escalating crisis. Surface frames such as "tip of the iceberg", "stem the tide", "broken system" and "overburdened" activate frames that contain security-related values, thus provoking audience fears and anxieties.

The key activist narrative on human rights and right to housing, titled the "Solid Floor of Protection" by the researchers, is about securing a solid floor of protection and basic adequate housing for all. This narrative primarily engages values of dignity, fairness, and justice, captured in statements such as "home is central to the dignity of every person". These self-transcendence values are associated with motivational goals concerned with the interests of others, going beyond self-interest. This is aligned with and supportive of the social change sought.

The activist narrative does communicate that change is possible. This is an important element for any advancing of social change goals. It is articulated in terms of achieving a re-imagined housing system. The change dynamics offered by the activist narrative are legal action and the formal monitoring of statutory obligations.

Principle Research Findings: Target Audience Narrative

Under the first theme explored, of housing insecurity and homelessness, the narrative that dominated with the target audience focused on the potential vulnerability of anybody to becoming homeless in the ever-worsening crisis in Ireland. This narrative was titled "House of Cards" by the researchers. In this narrative people are on "a knife edge", a "slippery slope" and all it takes is for one thing to go wrong, such as a rent increase, and "like a house of cards, it could all tip over" and one could find oneself homeless. This matches the "Victims of Dysfunction" activist narrative in being anxiety-inducing and engaging security values, specifically values of personal, family, community, and societal security.

This is not fruitful ground on which to build an activist narrative for a campaign on the right to housing. On a more positive note, however, the various audience narratives identified were found to overwhelmingly contain a systemic analysis of the causes of, and solutions to homelessness and housing insecurity, and a recognition of the problem as being complex and multi-layered.

The second narrative theme explored was human rights and the right to housing. In discussing human rights in general terms, there was little immediate resonance with the majority of the target audience. This presents a challenge to developing a rights-based activist narrative that will resonate with the wider public and mobilise a popular demand for a right to housing.

In discussing the more specific 'right to housing', the dominant narrative is one of entitlement and people getting things for free, such as a "free house", which is juxtaposed with a sense of "some of us have to work hard" for these things. This narrative was titled "It's not Fair" by the researchers. There is a concern at people's tax money being used to finance such unfairness. Values of security, with the associated motivational goal of maintaining the status quo, and values of power and control, with the associated motivational goal of pursuing self-interest, are activated by this narrative. "Free things", "my money" and "squeezed middle" are evident surface frames. This too is clearly not fruitful ground on which to build an activist narrative for a campaign on the right to housing.

Another audience narrative among those identified, however, appeared to hold more potential for alignment with the activist narrative. This narrative was titled "Caring Society" by the researchers. Within this narrative the target audience expressed concern that we are losing our compassion as a society and that there is a need to tap into our caring and compassionate natures in order to address the current crisis. In this narrative, self-transcendence values of care, compassion, respect, and justice are evident. Human rights, in this narrative, are about ensuring a decent standard of housing so that people can live with dignity and be treated with respect, showing compassion, and taking care of each other. This narrative holds some alignment with the 'Solid Floor of Protection" activist narrative.

Under the third and final theme explored, change and how change occurs, the dominant narrative that emerged with the target audience was titled "Overwhelmed" by the researchers. In this narrative, the problem is so overwhelming that change seems impossible, in the immediate term at least. The housing and homelessness crisis is seen as chronic, getting worse, and there is little faith in government providing a solution. In this 'overwhelmed' dynamic, people feel that the problem is too big for their individual actions to make any difference. The change dynamics

are captured in phrases such as “long battle”, “chronic”, “what difference can I make” and “overwhelmed”. Again, this is not fruitful ground on which to build an activist narrative.

A less dominant change narrative among those identified, which was titled “Journey of Change” by the researchers, appeared to hold more potential for alignment with the activist narrative in rendering change as being possible. This narrative called up recent developments in Ireland, including the marriage equality and abortion referenda as evidence of momentum for social change under the rider ‘we will get there in time’. This narrative included some emphasis on agency with talk of people empowering themselves and organising from the ground up.

Research Implications: A Future Campaign

This research project is the first step in developing messages for a campaign on the right to housing. The ‘Home for Good’ coalition is currently working to build on this information and analysis.

The activist narrative is being further refined. The shared core values that motivate the ‘Home for Good’ coalition are being identified and defined. A shared over-arching narrative on the problem, the solution, and the change dynamic is being honed. This over-arching values-led narrative will then be reviewed against the target audience narratives for alignment, gaps, and tensions.

This process will enable the development of campaign stories and messages. This involves finding and testing surface frames that will resonate with the target audiences while remaining true to the activist values and narratives. It is not, therefore, about mirroring the perceived priority values of the target audience, in order for the activist to convince them that they are all on the same side. There is no mobilising gain in such an approach. It is instead about identifying the self-transcendence values that will underpin the campaign and then transparently engaging those self-transcendence values with the wider public. These are self-transcendence values that people already hold but may not always prioritise. Once established, the next step would be to test campaign stories and messages with key audiences.

Research Implications: Current Communication Strategies

The research findings offer some perspectives of relevance to the future more general communication strategies of organisations concerned with homelessness and housing insecurity.

Current communication on the issue of homelessness and housing insecurity in an Irish context, tends towards crisis messaging, which, given the scale of the problem, is understandable. The associated framing of "people trapped", "the flow of families into homelessness", "the tip of the iceberg", however, can shape a narrative where homelessness and housing insecurity emerge as some sort of natural phenomenon over which we have no control, rather than as the result of political decision-making and choices. This feeds and exacerbates the 'overwhelmed' narrative in audiences, and their sense of fatalism about the possibility of change.

Crisis communication activates security values, which stoke anxiety and fears in audiences and stimulate the motivational goal of maintaining the status quo. This is counter-productive to the objectives for achieving social change to eliminate homelessness and housing insecurity.

The current crisis lends itself to facts and figured-based messaging: the soaring numbers, the numbers of families entering homelessness every month; and the public contests between activists and government representatives about the veracity of the homelessness figures. This can depersonalise the story, with people reduced to statistics. Such messaging fails to engage values and the gains that flow from this engagement. Facts and figures also get filtered through the stories that people already hold and the values underpinning those stories. If those stories do not hold self-transcendence values, the facts and figures do not engage such values or mobilise people to be concerned.

Individual stories are also relied on significantly in current communication strategies. These are primarily stories of individual hardship and misfortune. Individual stories tend to be recounted in the absence of any systemic analysis of homelessness and housing insecurity and can preclude any such analysis. This can be problematic for the search for social change, by limiting audience understanding of the change required, to the level of the individual rather than the institutional level. However, the research suggests this might be less of an issue in Ireland with its finding that systemic analyses are prevalent in the narratives of the target audience.

Individualising the problem of homelessness and housing insecurity narrows the audience peripheral vision on the issue, leading to public discourse contesting and debating about who is 'deserving' and 'undeserving' among those experiencing, or at risk of homelessness. The research included a focus on audience narratives

about who is affected by the crisis. Three prototypes were identified in these narratives which the researchers titled: the 'traditional' homeless person, the 'ordinary decent' homeless person, and 'the sponger' homeless person.

The 'traditional' homeless person prototype was typically described as a male, rough-sleeping, the visible homeless person, and typically experiencing issues with substance misuse and/or their mental health. The 'ordinary decent' homeless person prototype was typically described as a two-parent intact family with young children, living in emergency accommodation such as a hotel room, or in an overcrowded situation with extended family, and with issues of unemployment, inability to pay rent or mortgages. This prototype was the one that the target audience most identified with and the one that evoked the most empathy. The 'sponger' homeless person prototype on the other hand was likely to provoke anger in the target audience. This prototype was typically described as someone who has a sense of entitlement to, and manoeuvres to secure benefits, and who make demands: of the state and of landlords.

These prototypes need to be managed carefully in any communication work on homelessness and housing insecurity. The othering of the 'traditional' homeless prototype suggests there is a challenge to ensure this group does not get left out. The 'sponger' homeless prototype needs to be actively disrupted if social change is to be progressed, particularly in any search for a right to housing given the dominance of the "It's not Fair" narrative of the target audience in relation to human rights.

Organisations concerned with homelessness and housing insecurity could usefully, therefore, examine the full spectrum of their communication activities on foot of this research project. This could involve the consideration of developing a values-led approach. This would involve creating new communication content and implementing the communication approaches that flow from using a values lens.

New values-led communication content is required to engage the values that would motivate a concern for and action on this issue by the general public. Values-led communication demands creativity to develop narratives that move away from a reliance on facts and figures and from personal stories that are devoid of a systemic analysis. Values-led communication requires consistency and the messages developed for the campaign on the right to housing should be embedded across all communication initiatives of the organisations involved in the campaign.

New communication approaches are needed, firstly in relation to establishing the purpose of this communication and its potential contribution to the social change sought. This focuses attention on the audience for this communication and the

need for greater focus on the general public as a key audience. The social change required to eliminate homelessness and housing insecurity will be built on motivating a public demand for such change through strategic communication.

This communication work is occurring in a broader societal context where the activation of people's self-enhancement values tends to dominate, most significantly through mass media and consumer advertising. To counter this, there needs to be a consistent and critical mass engagement of self-transcendence values. This points to the need for more collective and shared approaches across civil society to communication on this issue. This critical mass engagement is beyond the capacity of any single organisation.

Collaboration in communication needs to be built around a wide spectrum of civil society organisations engaging shared self-transcendence values and deploying shared messages triggering such values in their communication work. This collaboration is required if the necessary impact is to be achieved in an environment so dominated by self-enhancement values. The ongoing work of the Home for Good coalition and their commitment to build on this research project offers room for real hope that such a critical mass engagement with self-transcendence values could be mobilised across a wide range of civil society organisations in support of a right to housing.

References

Crowley, N. (2015) *Equality and Human Rights: An Integrated Approach: Setting Standards for the Irish Equality and Human Rights Infrastructure* (Dublin: Equality and Rights Alliance).

Lakoff, G. (2014) *Don't Think of an Elephant: Knowing Your Values and Framing the Debate* (Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing).

Mullen, R. (2018) *Communicating Values: A Values-Led Approach to Strategic Communication for Social Change* (Dublin: Values Lab).

Schwartz, S. (1992) Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries, *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 25 pp.1-65.

Schwartz, S. (2007) Universalism Values and the Inclusiveness of our Moral Universe, *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 38(6) pp.711-728.

Simon Communities in Ireland (2018) *Making the Case for a Right to Housing in Ireland* (Dublin: Simon Communities).

Policy Reviews

Part C

Challenges to Development of Policy on Homelessness in Slovenia

Maša Filipovič Hrast[1]

Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana

Abstract_ *At national level several countries have adopted strategies to combat homelessness, while Slovenia seems to be lagging behind in this development. This policy review aims at portraying the situation in the country and untangling some of the determinants of the slow development of policies addressing homelessness. We base our review on the analysis of relevant legal and policy documents, available research in the area as well as eight interviews carried out with relevant stakeholders, such as academics, NGOs, local level policy makers and national level policy makers. The context of Slovenia's housing market is portrayed as important determinant with high homeownership rates and poor development of the rental housing stock. Additionally, the position of housing and homelessness on the policy agenda is given specific attention. What we identify is relatively low development of the 'convincing narrative', which is linked also to lack of research in the area, and general position of homelessness in housing and social documents and agendas. Furthermore, the coalition building is weak, linked also with dispersed responsibility between different actors and levels, despite advances seen in the NGO sector.*

Key words_ *housing, homelessness, policy development, Slovenia*

[1] The author thanks all the interviewees for their participation, and also Tilen Dernovšek for the help in carrying out the interviews.

ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online

Introduction

In the majority of European countries, the number of homeless people is increasing (Busch-Geertsema *et al*., 2014). At the same time, attention to homelessness issues at the policy level is also increasing. This is evident at the EU level as well as at national levels. In 2014, for example both the European Parliament and the EU Committee of the Regions called for a European homelessness strategy (Gosme and Anderson, 2015). At national level several countries have adopted strategies to combat homelessness, or even with a more ambitious goal of ending homelessness (see Gosme and Anderson, 2015; O'Sullivan, 2016). Slovenia seems to be lagging behind in this development; this policy review aims at portraying the situation in the country and untangling some of the determinants of the slow development of policies addressing homelessness.

Nevertheless, addressing homelessness is linked not only to the development of specific homeless strategies, but generally to housing policies and housing availability as well as welfare state functioning. One of primary factors stimulating increases in homelessness is the nature of and changes in the broader housing sector (Elsinga, 2015; O'Sullivan, 2016). Availability and accessibility of housing affects the position of vulnerable groups in the housing market and therefore is a primary point of reference to understand trends in homelessness and approaches to addressing the issue. Here, characteristics of the housing sector in Central and Eastern European countries are noteworthy (see Tosics and Hegedus, 2003; Lux, 2014; Stephens *et al.*, 2015), especially the underdevelopment of the social housing sector and the predominance of homeownership, which makes entry into stable, permanent housing more difficult for groups that are more vulnerable. Furthermore, new risks arising during the period of economic crisis, such as high unemployment rates, poverty and, in several European countries, increasing eviction rates may be determinants of the nature and extent of housing vulnerability (see Kenna, 2018).

The other important context within which policies addressing homelessness are developed is the broader welfare system. This in itself frames pathways of vulnerability and determines instruments addressing homelessness. Well-developed and functioning welfare systems can prevent many paths through which homelessness occurs, and the nature and extent of homelessness and the profile of those impacted by it may vary according to different welfare systems (Pleace, 2017). Existing welfare policies therefore frame different approaches to tackling homelessness. Central and Eastern European countries have a specific (post-socialist) legacy, where major reforms were also carried out within the welfare sector (Hegedus, 2011; Lux, 2014). Additionally, for a longer period European welfare states have been facing challenges, such as ageing populations and new social risks, alongside significant cutbacks and retrenchment due to economic crisis and

a more neoliberal policy agenda (see Schubert *et al.*, 2016; Taylor-Gooby *et al.*, 2017). Within the context of retrenchment of welfare programmes, the development of new strategies might be hindered, which is another contextual determinant to consider in the Slovenian case.

Therefore, the analysis of homelessness policy development in Slovenia will be framed within the wider context of the development of housing policy and the housing sector, as well as welfare state development and ways in which the risks of poverty and more complex social exclusion are tackled.

Regarding the development of targeted homeless policies, experiences from abroad indicate that an integrated homeless policy is most effective, as indicated in Finish homeless strategy (Pleace, 2017). However, many factors are relevant for the development of such policies. Firstly, existing research that enables following the extent, profile and trends in homelessness is important. The corpus of knowledge on homelessness enables development of more appropriate policy measures in national contexts, but it also enables placement of the issue on the public as well as political agenda, as has been indicated in several countries, such as Czech Republic (Lux, 2014), Belgium (Hermans, 2017) or in the Nordic countries (Benjaminsen and Knutagård, 2016).

Secondly, the role of the NGO sector is often vital in terms of advocacy of the most vulnerable and for the development of specific strategies. This is linked to the position and strength of the NGO in national contexts, their level of development and professionalisation (Lux, 2014; Fehér and Teller, 2016) as well as how internally connected and cooperative is this sector, e.g. in the form of an umbrella organisation. This influences the development of homelessness strategy, as the case of Poland illustrates (Wygnanska, 2009) or the Flemish case (Hermans, 2017). Local level initiatives also have an important role, as they can be scaled up within the national context, as in the case of Prague (Lux, 2014). In addition, using external experts and learning lessons from abroad is significant in forming complex and well-developed strategies (Gosme and Anderson, 2015; Hermans, 2017; Pleace, 2017).

Public perception of homeless people is also an important policy concern; framed by cultural and welfare contexts, public opinion has an impact on policy approaches and how high the issue is on the policy agenda. In transition countries, homelessness has often been framed as an expression of deviance (Fehér and Teller, 2016) and linking homelessness to personal problems (Lux, 2014). Based on welfare attitudes research and following van Oorschot's (2000) deservingness theory, the groups that are more often seen as being responsible for their own problems, that are perceived as different from the majority of population and not contributing to society will be perceived as less deserving of welfare aid. These groups will conse-

quently not be prioritised by policy makers and also the policy addressing such groups will be easier to cut, e.g in times of welfare retrenchment (see Van Oorschot and Rosma, 2017).

The goal of this policy review is to analyse the challenges associated with the development of (integrated) homelessness policy in Slovenia in the context of the above-described 'determinants' of this policy development. We base our review on the analysis of relevant legal and policy documents, available research in the area as well as eight interviews carried out with relevant stakeholders, such as academics, NGOs, local level policy makers and national level policy makers[2]. The factors affecting policy development are hard to disentangle and we do not claim to have completed a comprehensive review of all relevant determinants hindering development of policy on homelessness in Slovenia, we do however try to shed light on some of the important ones.

Homelessness in Slovenia: Contextual Framework and Policy Developments

As indicated in the introduction, this review aims to analyse homelessness policy development or more precisely, its lack of development in Slovenia. To help understand this process, we firstly describe the housing sector and welfare state framework and then more specifically address the development of services and programmes in the field.

Housing sector and housing policy context

The housing sector in Slovenia is, as is characteristic for other Central and Eastern European countries, marked with a predominance of homeownership, with 75% of households being homeowners in 2015, while private rental and social rental sectors are both very small; only 5% are renters with market rent and 5% with reduced rent[3]. After the largescale privatisation of public housing, the development of the social rented sector in Slovenia was slow and left to the municipal level. This has led to the lack of housing for vulnerable groups, as put forward in one interview:

---

2 The following interviews have been carried out in the period from May 2019 to September 2019. Three interviews were carried out with academics working in the field, two with NGO representatives and one with a local policy maker, and one with a professional policy advisor. These interviews were carried out in person or by telephone, recorded and transcribed. Additional interview was carried out by e-mail (sending the questions and receiving written answer) by a policy representative at the national level (from the relevant Ministry).

3 Data sent from Statistical office of RS, specific calculations done (to distinguish among the merged category of reduced rent or free), available on Eurostate, August 2016.

> Well, the state takes care of housing based on, so called, system, principle of enabling, so everyone takes care of themselves, only for the poorest the states takes care of. This all sounds very nice, but, the problems is, that there was not enough supply, not enough new housing, demand has increased but the supply was low. (Academic B)

This housing structure also dictates housing pathways. Housing accessibility often depends on family help, as cohabitation is more common in Slovenia, children leave the housing of the parents later than in many European countries (Mandic, 2008), and purchase of housing is based on significant help from relatives, either monetary or in-kind (Cirman, 2006). Therefore, groups that have poorer family resources are significantly more vulnerable in a system based on familililalistic support.

> Until this will continue, that parents, I think, are the ones helping the state, then things will remain as they are (…). Various instruments [implemented by the state, add, by auth.] are not serious… they are only so that the state looks as it is doing something. In reality, the state does not see any problem, and the citizens put up with this, as the parents solve the problems of their children and then nothing happens. (Academic B)

Most relevant for vulnerable groups is social housing and emergency dwellings, which only some of the largest municipalities offer. The demand exceeds the supply by far, with long waiting lists (Sendi, 2007; Mandič *et al*., 2012; Mandič and Filipovič, 2015, National Housing Fund, 2017), e.g. even four years for single persons (MOL, 2017). The main barrier to achieving the increase in provision of social housing as presented by the municipalities is the lack of financial means and therefore no significant increase in such provision is envisioned in the near future, as indicated in a study of National Housing Fund (2017).

This problem is recognised also by policy makers and experts.

> With new coalition agreement, there is a promise of additional financing of housing, 0,4% of GDP, which is €189 million for addressing housing problems, so that things will get better. There is more and more talk about the housing problems and I really hope that policy makers will see this and start seriously addressing the housing problems. (Policy officer, municipal level)

> This is a problem, that housing policy, now, for social housing its responsibility of municipalities, and they also have limited means for addressing this issue. (Academic B)

In general, housing policy and development has been neglected (see Sendi, 2007), with housing programmes being adopted late and far between, which indicates low priority of housing in general on the policy agenda, also mentioned by several interviewees.

> Regarding housing problems, in general in Ljubljana or in all Slovenia, the fact is that since independence this is a neglected problem. Mainly due to the fact that systematic financing of housing, of housing supply at the national level has been discontinued.. (Policy officer, municipal level)

> I would say that everything has remained the same, somehow, it did not change. Say in last 10, 20 years there were no radical changes, it stayed the same. I think the reason is public discourse, the story of housing issues, housing problems, housing policies, it is really an underdeveloped story. (Academic A)

The most recent housing policy document is the Resolution on National Housing Programme 2015-2025. Addressing extreme housing vulnerability is not among the policy priorities within the document, although there is a general goal of improving the accessibility of dwellings and strengthening the rental sector as one of its priority goals. In the private rental sector, it envisages establishment of a new institution for management of rental housing markets. This was mentioned in the interview with the municipal policy expert as a potentially important way of making rental dwellings more accessible. Additionally, changes are planned in the cost of social rents and in subsidies for rent, with possible increases in both. The Resolution also states that the Housing Fund will in the future be responsible for financing emergency housing units, in cooperation with municipalities. However, four years on since adoption of this Resolution, no significant changes have been implemented in this area. One of the important projects that has been implemented is resettlement of evicted households, with 11 housing units offered for this, and a new cooperation protocol set up to improve cooperation. Regarding development of a public institution for management of rental housing, a working group was established and initial research carried out (Kerbler and Sendi, 2019). In October 2019, the proposal of the new Housing act was presented to the public that would implement many of the goals set up in the programme. How these will be adopted and later on implemented remains to be seen. Not surprisingly therefore, interviewed experts were also critical of the document, pointing to the implementation gap that existed already, and is therefore likely to remain also in the present. The implementation gap is something that has been noted as an important shortcoming in reforms of CEE countries (see Hegedus, 2011).

> Well, regarding the new housing programme, yes, well, nothing new, a programme where a lot of nice things are written, but the question is implementation. If we look back, the previous housing programme, from 2000 to 2009, it contained similar things, very good things, goals and our analysis has shown, that almost none of them were realized. (Academic B)

Welfare state development and trends

The Slovenian welfare system is described as a mix of conservative-corporative and social democratic systems and after transition it was marked with gradual changes, often diverging from more extensive welfare state restructuring typical for other Central and Eastern European countries (Kolarič *et al.*, 2009). The poverty rates in Slovenia are lower than in the EU on average, and despite worsening social conditions due to economic crisis, the general at risk of poverty rates have remained lower than average in the EU, and have after a peak in 2015 (14.3%) dropped again (Eurostat, 2018a).

The economic crisis in 2008 has affected Slovenia considerably and put additional pressure on existing welfare systems, which have already been under pressure due to the intensive ageing of the population (Filipovič Hrast and Rakar, 2017). This has led to reforms of the system, of which one of the most comprehensive was reform of the social protection system (with new legislation coming into force in 2012). Within these changes, however, financial social assistance as an important financial support for the most vulnerable, such as homeless people, has remained largely intact and has even been increased (Stropnik, 2015; Filipovič and Kopač, 2016). A positive trend that can be observed is the increase in GDP share for expenditure on social exclusion, which has almost doubled from 2000 (1.6% of social protection expenditure) to 2015 (3.11% of social protection expenditure) (see Table 1). However, the low share of expenditure on housing is indicative, which has increased, but in 2015 comprised just 0.1% of total social protection expenditure, which is much lower than the average for EU 15 (2.08% of total social protection expenditure) (see Table 1).

Table 1: Social Protection Benefits by Function, 1995-2015 (% of total social expenditure)

	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
Slovenia					
Total expenditure		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Social protection benefits		97.42	97.85	97.90	98.30
Family/children		8.97	8.41	8.69	7.50
Unemployment		4.15	3.20	2.69	2.69
Housing		**0.00**	**0.06**	**0.04**	**0.10**
Social exclusion n.e.c.		**1.60**	**2.78**	**2.34**	**3.11**
Sickness / healthcare and disability		38.65	40.00	38.65	37.43
Old age and survivors		44.05	43.40	45.49	47.47
EU 15					
Total expenditure	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Social protection benefits	95.61	95.92	96.15	95.82	96.45
Family/children	7.55	8.00	8.08	8.23	8.25
Unemployment	7.75	5.80	5.68	5.92	4.72
Housing	**2.13**	**2.09**	**2.19**	**2.05**	**2.08**
Social exclusion n.e.c.	**1.22**	**1.14**	**1.72**	**1.90**	**1.92**
Sickness / healthcare and disability	34.36	34.34	35.20	34.98	36.00
Old age and survivors	42.60	44.54	43.28	42.73	43.49

Source: Eurostat, 2018b

Despite some positive trends, the general direction of welfare state reforms has been that of retrenchment and cost containment (Filipovič and Rakar, 2017), which sets the limits for potential expansion of underdeveloped sectors, such as homelessness services and programmes (see next section). Homelessness has not been defined in legal documents or strategies. Social Protection Act (Zakon o socialnem varstvu; Official Gazette, 2006, with latest changes in 2019) mentions the provision of crisis accommodation in general and development of crisis accommodation for homeless people has been part of national programmes in the field of social protection. In the last Resolution on National Programme of Social Protection for the period of 2013 to 2020 the goals are reduction of poverty and increasing social inclusion of the vulnerable. Homeless services and their further development are part of the resolution, focusing on increases in day services, increasing the availability of temporary accommodation, as well as development of additional programmes of housing support. We discuss service sector development in more detail in the next section.

Another important welfare policy context is that since independence, some of the tasks in the field of social protection that were previously national have been transferred to lower levels, i.e. to municipalities. Housing of vulnerable groups, e.g. with social or emergency housing is one such task. The municipalities also face severe underfinancing and lack of governmental systemic support to tackle such problems, as we have already mentioned. On the other hand, the social problems in general

are seen as the responsibility of the state. Homelessness as being at an intersection of both seems to present a challenge as it is unclear which level is predominantly responsible for addressing it.

> Regarding local communities, this is a problem all the time, that our local communities do not see this as a problem that should be addressed at the local level. The social problems are something that the state should take care of. So I think here there is a lack… that also from local level these programmes should be more supported. The exceptions are of course Ljubljana and Maribor as the biggest, but the rest… A bit unfortunate is also the large number of municipalities, and then the smallest do not approach this. (Professional, policy advisor A)

> Local policies, I think, Municipality of Ljubljana has done a lot in their local strategy in addressing homelessness, and also finances a lot. We are lucky we have succeeded, but this is an exception, I think, that we cooperate with Housing Funds, but the key is Ministry for environment and planning, which doesn't address this issue at all. (NGO representative B)

> We cannot reach this field. It seems far removed. To affect the housing strategy. I think there is no one to talk to on that side [i.e. Ministry of environment and planning, add. auth.] (…) they do not see this (i.e. the homelessness) as their theme. Homelessness was never perceived to be part of their scope of work. (Academic C)

This is also linked to poor cooperation among various levels and actors, which has been mentioned in interviews.

> You know, every ministry, there is no cooperation… this goes without saying, this is something all know… I have a feeling that this cooperation should be improved, from Ministry of social affairs appeal should be, to all others, to work together, based on needs of people… (NGO representative A)

> Municipal housing Fund works well, is active and they also see that there is a lack of housing finances. They say this in public, but there is no strong position, for cooperation, for all to come together on various points… I do not see that, I think everybody thinks they are doing ok themselves, they do not build alliances. (Academic A)

Research on homelessness in Slovenia

A good research base that gives knowledge of the extent and profile of homelessness, drivers and pathways as well as changes and trends is one of the important bases for informed policy making. This kind of information is vital for the presentation of the problem to the wider public as well as policy makers and is the ground

base of formation of policies in the field. Lacking information can therefore present one of the most important drawbacks for development of (comprehensive) policy on homelessness.

In Slovenia, there is no official data on levels of homelessness, and no official definition of homelessness. The existing data encompasses the number of users of different services for homeless people, which the Social Protection Institute of Republic of Slovenia has gathered regularly since 2007. In 2017 the number of users was 3 605 (Smolej Jež *et al.*, 2018). This kind of data of course does not encompass all types of homelessness, as many homeless people may not be using any services, and also there is the possibility of counting the same people more than once, if they use multiple services. Based on evaluation by umbrella organisation of organisations working with homeless people, there are more than 6 700 homeless people in Slovenia (Lozej, 2017). Due to lack of data, the exact extent of homelessness in Slovenia is not known, and trends are not clear. In general, evaluations indicate that homelessness is increasing (Hofler and Bojnec, 2013) and that its structure is changing, as there are some indications that the number of homeless children and families is increasing (see e.g. Dekleva and Razpotnik, 2015). One of the interviewees[4] also mentioned a more significant diversification of the homeless population, as along with the mentioned families, young people and foreigners from European and non-European countries are also increasingly represented.

The research on homelessness in Slovenia is very limited, with a few research projects mainly focused on one municipality – such as Dekleva and Razpotnik (2007), Razpotnik and Dekleva (2009), Košan and Dekleva (2015), and just one national project (Dekleva *et al.*, 2010). Following an increase in the number of studies in the time period before the economic crisis, the volume of research projects in this field have later again decreased. The lack of research has been put forward several times in the interviews as an important drawback for policy development in this sector.

> Also the role of research, as a sort of catalyst should be there, in various bodies and fora. This is the only solution I can see. (Academic A)

> The fact is that we do not have a number of homeless in Slovenia (…) The number the Ministry of Labour, Family and social affairs gives out, are number we organisations give, number of people that come to us. But there is no general number, people who sleep outside and not come to us, there was never such a count. We need this. We need a number, extent. Then we can make a strategy. (NGO representative B)

> (…)the problem is that nobody knows how many there are [the homeless, and by auth.], because nobody works on that.(…). (Academic B)

4 Interviewee with Academic C.

The lack of research is also an important obstacle to reducing stereotypical portrayals of homelessness that exist in the media, predominantly linking them to beggars with alcohol abuse problem (see Razpotnik and Dekleva, 2007; Filipovič Hrast, 2008). Also media coverage of the topic in Slovenia seems to not focus on governmental actions and solutions and does not call into question the adequacy or approach of current policies (see Filipovič Hrast, 2008). Media are symbolic resources that frame who homeless people are, causes of homelessness and solutions (Jacobs *et al.,* 2003; Hodgetts *et al.*, 2005). The lack of focus and the individualised instead of systemic approach to this social problem hinder development of comprehensive policies. Negative popular views of homelessness have been found in CEE countries (see Lux 2014; Fehér and Teller, 2016). Based on deservingness theory (see van Oorschot, 2000), this position can also play a significant role in determining the position people have toward welfare state programmes and policies addressing these groups and is not conducive to the development of wider and more comprehensive policies.

Trends in service provision for homeless people and role of NGOs

The provision of homeless services is part of the welfare system structure, which is pivotal in addressing various vulnerabilities and is one of the determinants of the profile of homeless people and paths into homelessness (see Pleace, 2017). The Slovenian welfare state, when observing service sector development, can be described according to Esping Andersen's (1990) typology as having characteristics of the social democratic regime, with well-developed services evident in public education, childcare and health care. However, homeless services only started developing in the late 1980s and 1990s, firstly as part of the public network of providers of social services. However, the development in the decades that followed did not strengthen public sector services, but instead saw the development of the role of the NGO sector in provision of these services. In 2017, among 23 service providers, six are part of public services, i.e. centres for social work and public institutes, while the rest are NGOs (Smolej Jež *et al.,* 2018). This we can observe as an ongoing trend of delegating the responsibilities of the state to other providers. However, the state has remained an important financer of the services, as it co-finances the programmes – approximately 50% of the required funding, while an additional third of co-financing usually comes from the local levels – municipalities (Smolej Jež *et al*., 2018).

This transfer can mean improved service delivery and innovations that may come from smaller, more flexible NGOs; however it can also mean withdrawal of the state in addressing specific vulnerabilities.

> NGOs had an important role, by adapting to the needs of local communities. We have several very successful programmes that have come closer to the needs of the users. The response of local levels varies, in some cases they are responsive, in some less. (Policy officer, national level)

> There are very local solutions, that arise, and try solving the issue at local level, but they are not systemic solutions. (Academic C)

> The public services do not concern themselves too much with this, of course there are individual exceptions that work in individual organisations, and they send people here… we are financed for this, it is true, but I think that public institutions do not concern themselves with this, which is for me very problematic. (NGO representative B)

> In Centres for social work, they are concerned increasingly with so many different other things, that working with homeless, through transfers, they are paid and other rights they have, as other materially deprived, but to work more in depth, no, that not at all. (Professional, policy advisor A)

An important positive trend has been an increase in service provision in the last 10 years as the number of services has tripled from the beginning of the 2000s (Smolej Jež *et al*., 2018). What seems to be a more negative part of the development is that the increasing number of programmes has not also meant a significant diversification of the programmes for homeless people, as the largest increase in service provision is due to the increasing number of shelters. There is some innovation in the sector, evident in new programmes such as prevention programmes (prevention of eviction), and also development of programmes that offer housing support and resettlement programmes, linked to the Housing First approach, which however remain small-scale initiatives.Nevertheless, the sector is not responding to the heterogenisation of the homeless population and therefore does not address its needs.

> Regarding the support for (homeless) families, there were no special steps taken. (…) It is a problem, if they use the same services… Firstly, they do not use them. They do not reach them. And, the programmes that exist are not appropriate for families, for children. (Academic C)

The interviewees have also mentioned this relatively small progress and innovation within the service sector.

> In all the years that I follow these programmes, they have not changed a lot (…) They remain on this classic programmes, so that a significant shift, in terms of content, conceptual shift, it is not there. (Professional, policy advisor A)

> Yes, we need to make a step forward in our programmes. I think, we are still following the staircase model (…) I think we need to change. (NGO representative B)

Challenges to adoption of specific policies addressing homelessness

As mentioned in the introduction, cooperation within the sector is important to achieve policy development. An important part in the development of this sector was linking the organisations working with homeless people within the umbrella organisation Brezdomni – do ključa. This can be seen as important progress in developing cooperation between services, and sharing of experiences, which also happens in the congress of homeless organised yearly. This progress was also emphasized by the NGO representative.

> I think it is important, this cooperation, I think NGOs cooperate more, which is a progress, maybe it sounds funny, but I think we were before, each on separate ends. (NGO representative B)

Civil society is one of the actors where pressures for policy development often start, and can be an important actor in formations of adopting policy strategies for homeless people (see e.g. Lux, 2014; Fehér and Teller, 2016; Hermans, 2017). Also in Slovenia there were initiatives for preparing a draft national strategy for homeless and socially excluded populations within the NGO sector, first in 2010 based on multiple actors and international experts in the context of a conference on social exclusion, poverty and homelessness and development of a proposal of national strategy in the field of homelessness[5] and later in 2016 within the umbrella organisation Brezdomni do kljuca.[6]

However, a more significant breakthrough has not happened despite the efforts of the NGOs, due perhaps to persistent lack of interest of decision makers for this topic. Also, the position of NGOs in Slovenia is not perceived to be very strong, due to low professionalisation of the sector, as well the sector not being heard by policy makers (see Rakar and Deželan, 2016). The low level of success might also be linked to general housing issues, as we have mentioned when describing the housing policy context.

The experts and NGO representatives were positive regarding the need for an integrated policy approach, either in form of coalition formation, a coordinated response, or a more targeted strategy to address the problem.

> I think that we would need to link all sectors, as was the case of Finland, where it came from top to bottom, the preparation of comprehensive strategy… the idea is that all ministries that are relevant fort his area, they cooperate, Ministry of environment and planning, Ministry of labour, family and social affairs, Health Ministry, together with local communities to build a strategy. (NGO representative B)

---

5 http://www.kraljiulice.org/library/491/konferenca-o-socialni-izkljucenosti-revscini-in-brezdomstvu-knjizica.pdf

6 https://sobotainfo.com/novica/lokalno/problematika-revscine-brezdomstva-je-vsakodnevna/119935

> We need a consultative body, that would work continuously, in which important policy actors would carry informed democratic debate, in which they articulate their various interests and try to combine them, so that they reach a common goal, that would be improving the housing situation of the deprived. (Academic A)

Nevertheless, a significant scepticism also remains, that the strategy in itself is not enough and that an implementation gap might still remain.

> Of course strategic documents are very important, but with them also policy makers wash their hands saying 'we have accepted the targets and we will work on that'. But then changes must be made at concrete level, and it depends on individual stakeholders, either Housing Funds or local communities that are in touch with the problems, on how much emphasis they give to these problems in society. (Policy officer, municipal level)

> By all means a strategy is important, but I believe that strategies without concrete action plan, with clear division of responsibilities and clear resources will not bring improvements, sadly. (Policy officer, municipal level)

> The problem of all these policy documents we have, for example in other areas, is that they might be well written, but implementation is usually poor… but to at least have a document, it would be a step in a right direction. (Professional, policy advisor A)

Conclusions

The above policy review and institutional context indicates some of the developmental issues that hinder more comprehensive policy development to address the homelessness problem in Slovenia. Jacobs *et al.* (2003) suggest that three conditions are necessary for a housing problem to be recognised, defined as a problem, and acted upon: first, a convincing narrative needs to be developed; second, a coalition of support has to be constructed; and third, this coalition needs to ensure that institutional measures are implemented.

To structure a convincing narrative, the lack of research presents a hindrance in Slovenia, along with limited and individualised popular public views and media representations of homelessness. The narrative of housing, as was put forward by one of the interviewed experts, is in general not developed enough. This can be linked to wider housing and welfare contexts, where housing issues were left completely to private domains and are being addressed primarily through market and family, while welfare reform has been prioritising other pressing issues such as the ageing of the population and the need for cost containment in times of welfare restructuring and later in times of the crisis.

Regarding the second step, formation of coalition, again we can identify several obstacles. These range from dispersion of responsibility of the issue between local/municipal level and national level, to problems of cooperation among various actors, as debated by experts in the interviews. Especially pronounced was the poor cooperation among relevant Ministries. This of course is common in other countries in the context of formation of policies targeting homelessness, where challenges of overcoming political divisions and reaching a consensus among actors were noted (see Lux, 2014; Hermans, 2017).

We can also identify a potential advantage, and that is the improved cooperation among the NGOs working in the field. However, goals relating to common narrative (step one) might still be hard to reach, as views on the issue and ways to address it are still rather varied. There is also the problem of slow innovation, which one of the experts interviewed noted, and is evident in the slow development of the sector's more innovative approaches, despite these being mentioned in the strategies in the field of social protection. Furthermore, underfinancing of the third sector as well as low levels of professionalisation (Rakar *et al*., 2011, Rakar and Deželan, 2016) hinders their negotiating position toward policy makers.

These determinants therefore seem to be among the relevant reasons that adopting a (comprehensive) homelessness strategy seems a far removed goal in Slovenia. Despite having an important role in coalition building and setting the agenda, such a strategy is not a goal in itself, as steps for implementation and realisation is what is really needed. Perhaps an important move toward more holistically addressing the housing of vulnerable groups within wider housing policy is the proposal of the new Housing Act in 2019, however the implementation and effects of new goals and policies will remain to be seen.

References

Benjaminsen, L. and Knutagård, M. (2016) Homelessness Research and Policy Development: Examples from the Nordic Countries, *European Journal of Homelessness* 10 (3) pp.45-66.

Busch-Geertsema, V., Benjaminsen, L., Filipovič Hrast, M. and Nicholas Pleace, N. (2014) *Extent and Profile of Homelessness in European Member States: a Statistical Update, EOH Comparative Studies on Homelessness* (Brussels: FEANTSA).

Cirman, A. (2006) Kako dosegljiva so stanovanja za slovenska gospodinjstva? How accessible is Housing for Slovene Households? V: Mandič, Srna (ur.), Cirman, Andreja (ur.). Stanovanje v Sloveniji 2005. Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, str. 55-70.

Dekleva, B. and Razpotnik, Š. (2007) *Brezdomstvo v Ljubljani* Homelessness in Ljubljana. (Ljubljana: Pedagoška fakulteta v Ljubljani).

Dekleva, B. and Razpotnik, Š. (2015). Cestno brezdomstvo v Ljubljani [Street Homelessness in Ljubljana], *Socialna pedagogika* 19(3/4) pp.275-297.

Dekleva, B., Filipovič Hrast, M., Nagode, M., Razpotnik, Š., and Smolej, S. (2010) *Ocena obsega odkritega in skritega brezdomstva v Sloveniji: zaključno poročilo študije [Evaluation of the Extent of Hidden and Visible Homelessness in Slovenia]* (Ljubljana: Inštitut RS za socialno varstvo, Fakulteta za družbene vede UL, Pedagoška fakulteta UL, p. 90).

Elsinga, M. (2015) Changing Housing Systems and their Potential Impacts on Homelessness, *European Journal of Homelessness* 9(1) pp.15-35.

Esping-Andersen, G. (1990) *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press).

Eurostat (2018a) *Income distribution and monetary poverty*. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database [Accessed 3 December 2018].

Eurostat (2018b) Social protection data. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/social-protection/data [Accessed 3 December 2018].

Fehér, B. and Teller, N. (2016) An Emerging Research Strand: Housing Exclusion in Central and South East Europe, *European Journal of Homelessness* 10(3) pp.67-85.

Filipovic Hrast, M. (2008) Media Representations of Homelessness and the Link to (Effective) Policies: The Case of Slovenia, *European Journal of Homelessness* 2 pp.115-137.

Filipovič Hrast, M. and Kopac, A. (2016) Slovenia: Continuous Gradual Change of the Welfare State?, in: K. Schubert, P. de Villota and J. Kuhlmann (Eds.) *Challenges to European Welfare Systems*, pp.693-718. (Switzerland: Springer).

Filipovič Hrast, M. and Rakar, T. (2017) The Future of the Slovenian Welfare State and Challenges to Solidarity, in: P. Taylor-Gooby, B. Leruth and H. Chung (Eds.) *After Austerity: Welfare State Transformation in Europe after the Great Recession*, pp.115-135. (Oxford University Press, Oxford).

Gosme, L. and Anderson, I. (2015) International Learning as a Driver of Innovation in Local-Level Policy-Making: Achievements and Challenges from Peer Review of Local Homelessness Policies, *European Journal of Homelessness* 9(1) pp.37-58.

Hegedus, J. (2011) Social Safety Nets, The Informal Economy and Housing Poverty: Experiences in Transitional Countries, *European Journal of Homelessness* 5(1) pp.15-26.

Hermans, K. (2017) A Flemish Strategy to Combat Homelessness, *European Journal of Homelessness* 11(2) pp.135-145.

Hodgetts, D., Cullen, A. and Radley, A. (2005) Television Characterisations of Homeless People in the United Kingdom, *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy* 5(1) pp.29-48.

Höfler, K. and Bojnec, Š. (2013) Kvalitativna analiza vzrokov in posledic brezdomstva [Qualitative Analysis of Reasons and Consequences of Homelessness], *Socialno delo* 52(4) pp.261-272.

Jacobs, K., Kemeny, J. and Manzi, T. (2003) Power, Discursive Space and Institutional Practices in the Construction of Housing Problems, *Housing Studies* 18(4) pp.429-446.

Kenna, P. (2018) *Loss of Homes and Evictions Across Europe: A Comparative Legal and Policy Examination: Elgar Land And Housing Law And Policy Series* (Cheltenham; Northampton: E. Elgar).

Kerbler, B. and Sendi, R. (2019) Dostopnost do stanovanja: izvajanje resolucije o nacionalnem stanovanjskem programu. (Accessibility of Housing: Resolution on National Housing Programme) Urban Planning institute, MOP: Zagotavljanje kakovostnih in dostopnih bivališč: vloga različnih deležnikov za doseganje cilj, (Ensuring Good Quality and Accessible Housing: Role of Various Stakeholders) okrogla miza14.10.2019. Ljubljana.

Kolarič, Z., Kopač, A. and Rakar, T. (2009) The Slovene Welfare System: Gradual Reform Instead of Shock Treatment, in: K. Schubert, S. Hegelich and U. Bazant (Eds.) *The Handbook of European Welfare Systems*, pp.444-461. (New York: Routledge).

Košan, H., in: Dekleva B. (2015) Končno poročilo o izvedbi terenske akcije “Tisti, ki hodite mimo… in tisti, ki ostajamo na ulici” (Final report on action "Those who pass by... and those who remain on the street"). Available at http://www.kraljiulice.org/library/979/hana-kosan-in-bojan-dekleva-(2015)-koncno-porocilo-o-izvedbi-terenske-akcije-tisti-ki-hodite-mimo--in-tisti-ki-ostajamo-na-ulici.pdf.

Lozej, M. (2017) Po nekaterih ocenah je v Sloveniji med 3000 in 6700 brezdomcev. (Evaluations Indicate There Are Between 3000 and 6700 Homeless in Slovenia) Statistical Office of RS (SURS). Posebna objava 3.10.2017.

Lux, M. (2014) Milestones in the Development and Implementation of a Governmental Strategy on Homelessness in the Czech Republic, *European Journal of Homelessness* 8(2) pp.95-118.

Mandič, S. (2008) Home-leaving and its Structural Determinants in Western and Eastern Europe: an Exploratory Study, *Housing Studies* 23(4) pp.615-636.

Mandič, S. and Filipovič Hrast, M. (2015) Alternative socialnemu stanovanju: pogledi prosilcev o različnih možnostih [Alternatives to Social Housing: Applicants’ Views of Various Policy Options], *Urbani izziv* 26 (1) 5-16 pp.69-81.

Mandič, S., Filipovič Hrast, M., Mrzel, M. and Rozman, T. (2012) *Kako izboljšati ponudbo najemnih stanovanj v mestni občini Ljubljana: končno poročilo*. (How to Improve The Rental Housing Fund in Ljubljana Municipality: final report) Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, Fakulteta za družbene vede, Center za proučevanje družbene blaginje.

MOL (2017) *Stanovanjski program mestne občine Ljubljana*. (Housing Programme of Municipality Of Ljubljana) Ljubljana: Javni stanovanjski sklad MOL [Online]. Available at: https://www.ljubljana.si/assets/Seje/15494/7.-toka---stanovanjski-program-2017-in-2018-ns-jss-mol.pdf [Accessed 29 January 2019].

National Housing Fund (2017) Poročilo – ugotavljanje potreb o vrstah stanovanjskega fonda v občinah. (Report on Diverse Housing Needs in Municipalities) Stanovanjski sklad RS. 3.4.2017.

O’Sullivan, E. (2016) Ending Homelessness in Ireland: Ambition, Adversity, Adaptation?, *European Journal of Homelessness* 10(2) pp.11-39.

Pleace, N. (2017) The Action Plan for Preventing Homelessness in Finland 2016-2019: The Culmination of an Integrated Strategy to End Homelessness?, *European Journal of Homelessness* 11(2) pp.95-115.

Rakar, T. and Dezelan, T. (2016) Opolnomočenje civilnodružbenih organizacij v Sloveniji. (Empowerment of civil organisations in Slovenia) Teorija in praksa – Theory and prasxis journal: revija za družbena vprašanja 53(2) pp.449-468.

Rakar, T., Deželan, T., Šifkovič Vrbica, S., Kolarič, Z., Črnak-Meglič, A. and Nagode, M. (2011) *Civil Society in Slovenia. 1st printing* (Ljubljana: Uradni list Republike Slovenije).

Razpotnik, Š. and Dekleva, B. (2007) *Na cesti – brezdomci o sebi in drugi o njih. [On the Street – Homeless About Themselves and Others About Them].* (Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, Pedagoska fakulteta).

Razpotnik, Š. and Dekleva, B. (2009) Homelessness and the Accessibility of the Health Care System, *Socialna pedagogika* 13(2) pp.111-130.

Resolution on National Social Protection Programme 2013-2020 (2013) Official Gazette 39/2013.

Schubert, K., de Villota, P., and J. Kuhlmann (2016) *Challenges to European Welfare Systems* (New York: Springer Publishing).

Sendi, R. (2007) *Stanovanjska reforma: pričakovanja, potrebe in realizacija* (Housing Reforms: Expectations, Needs and Realisation) (Ljubljana: Urbanistični inštitut Republike Slovenije).

Smolej Jež, S., Rosič, J., Ramović, S., Vidrih N., Žiberna, V., Kovač, N. and Kobal Tomc, B.(2018) *Spremljanje socialnovarstvenih programov: poročilo o izvajanju programov v letu 2017 (Evaluation of Programmes of Social Protection in 2017).* Ljubljana: IRSSV.

Stephens, M., Lux, M. and Sunega, P. (2015) Post-socialist Housing Systems in Europe: Housing Welfare Regimes by Default?, *Housing Studies* 30(8) pp.1210-1234.

Stropnik, N. (2015) *ESPN Thematic Report on Minimum Income Schemes Slovenia 2015* (Brussels: European Commission, European Social Policy Network).

Taylor-Gooby, P., Leruth, B. and Chung, H. (2017) (Eds.) *After Austerity: Welfare State Transformation in Europe after the Great Recession* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Tosics, I., and Hegedus, J. (2003) Housing in South-Eastern Europe, in: S. Lowe and S. Tsenkova (Eds.) *Housing Change in Eastern and Central Europe*, pp.21-45. (Aldershot: Ashgate).

Van Oorschot, W. (2000) Who Should Get What, and Why? On Deservingness Criteria and the Conditionality of Solidarity among the Public, *Policy and Politics* 28(1) pp.33-48.

Van Oorschot, W. and Roosma, F. (2017) The Social Legitimacy of Targeted Welfare and Welfare Deservingness, in: W. Van Oorschot, F. Roosma, B. Meuleman and T. Reeskens (Eds.) *The Social Legitimacy of Targeted Welfare: Attitudes to Welfare Deservingness*, pp.3-36. (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar).

Wygnanska, J. (2009) The Development of a National Homeless Strategy in Poland: Achievements and Challenges, *European Journal of Homelessness* 3 pp.201-214.

Zakon o socialnem varstvu-ZSV (2007) Social Protection Act- [Online]. Available at: http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO869 [Accessed 10th October 2019].

Delivering the Right to Housing? Why Scotland Still Needs an 'Ending Homelessness' Action Plan

Isobel Anderson

Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Stirling, Scotland, UK

Abstract_ *In 2018, the Scottish Government launched the 'Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan', just 6 years after the earlier '2012 target' for implementation of the previous major review of homelessness policy. Scotland had introduced a modernised legislative framework for homelessness, with the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act of 2003, strengthening the legal rights of homeless people to assistance with housing. Using a policy analysis framework, this paper revisits the impact of the earlier legislation, identifying perceived gaps in implementation, which framed the context for further review. The paper examines the work programme of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG), which contributed to policy review, and outlines key components of the 2018 action plan. The analysis reflects critically on the potential for meaningful progress on ending homelessness over the five years from 2018-2023. Given international interest in prior homelessness policy in Scotland, this research was conducted to inform a European and wider international audience of the further ambitions to end homelessness in Scotland. The study adopted desk-based methods, drawing on published administrative data on homelessness, publicly available policy and practice documents, and the wider research evidence on homelessness. The analysis demonstrates that while the Scottish approach still compares favourably internationally, robust commitment to policy delivery, as well as monitoring of implementation and review of outcomes all remain essential to ensure policy effectiveness.*

Keywords_ *Homelessness Law, Policy Review, Housing Rights*

ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online

Introduction

Local housing authorities in Scotland have had legal duties to respond to homelessness since the introduction of the Housing (Homeless Persons) (Scotland) Act 1977. The provision of affordable rented housing by local authorities (Merret, 1979) and housing associations (Malpass and Murie, 1999) provided a pool of housing through which local authorities could meet their duties to homeless households. In Scotland, public sector housing provision peaked in the 1970s with local authorities providing 54% of the dwelling stock in 1976 (Stephens *et al*., 2019, p.111, Table 17b). The Housing (Scotland) Act, 1980 introduced discounted sales to sitting tenants (the 'Right to Buy') precipitating the subsequent decline of council housing, while growth in the voluntary Housing Association sector's contribution to affordable housing supply continued through the late 20th century. The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 consolidated much of Scotland's prior housing legislation, including the powers and duties of local authorities in relation to homelessness.

The early 21st century saw enhanced control over law and policy on housing and homelessness within Scotland. These were core policy areas devolved to the Scottish Parliament created in 1999. Homelessness has remained a key social issue throughout the first 20 years of the Parliament's operation (Berry, 2019). In November of 2018, the Scottish Government and Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) launched the 'Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan'. This marked a second major review of Scottish homelessness policy since the creation of the Scottish Parliament. The Action Plan (COSLA and Scottish Government, 2018) emerged from the work programme and recommendations of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG, discussed below) and a report on homelessness produced by the Scottish Parliament Local Government and Communities Committee (2018). Following a short introduction to the research approach, the paper revisits previous phases of homelessness policy change to identify how gaps in effectiveness led to the review programme undertaken by HARSAG, and the launch of the 2018 Action Plan. The final discussion reflects critically on the prospects for meaningful progress on ending homelessness by 2023.

Research Approach

This paper provides a critical analysis of homelessness policy review in Scotland to inform an international, mainly European audience. The analysis builds directly on prior contributions to the policy debate (Anderson, 2004; Anderson, 2007; Anderson and Serpa, 2013). While the author has longstanding interests in homelessness policy and research in Scotland (and internationally) they were not directly involved in the 2017-18 review or in producing evidence for that review. Rather, the

research method adopted was desk based policy analysis in order to produce a timely critique, to inform an international audience of researchers, policy makers and homelessness practitioners. The analysis draws on existing research evidence, publicly available administrative data and policy documentation, including published papers of HARSAG and content of the Ending Homelessness Action Plan.

The policy process is commonly conceptualised as problem solving (Melcher and Schwartz, 2019), involving either stages or a cycle of problem definition, identification of policy options and desired outcomes, decision-making, implementation and evaluation. The move from policy making as being simply government driven, to a collaborative governance process has been increasingly recognised (Stoker, 1988; Klijn and Koppenjan, 2012) with a wide range of stakeholders potentially influential in a policy community. Policy analysis has also adopted evidence-based approaches in the drive to generate workable solutions to seemingly intractable social problems (Nutley, Walter and Davies, 2007). In considering policy change over the longer term, and across different nation states, Anderson, Dyb and Finnerty (2016) applied institutional theory and the notion of path dependency (North, 1990; Mahoney, 2000; Bengtsson and Ruonavaara, 2010) to homelessness policy review. Path dependency (the idea that history and political governance 'matter' for policy outcomes) was found to be an emerging approach in European homelessness literature, but valuable in comparing countries that shared some characteristics but diverged in others:

> 'despite institutional inertia and converging processes at European level, the analysis suggested that national 'politics' matters – as policies can defend inclusive, housing led approaches to homelessness, even in an era of neoliberal political convergence, economic crisis and austerity politics.' (Anderson, Dyb and Finnerty, 2016, p.120).

While drawing on concepts of nation state-level institutionalism and path dependency, this paper also considers multi-level and networked governance as influences on the implementation of homelessness policy in Scotland over a medium-long term period. The 'problem solving' approach to policy also remained critical. The Scottish approach to homelessness over 2003-2012 had been widely referred to as 'world-leading' and significant for international lesson learning (COSLA and Scottish Government, 2018; Watts *et al*., 2018), prompting the core research question addressed here as to why further policy review and a new action plan were needed within less than a decade?

Helping Homeless People – Policy Review in the 2000s

Early in the life of the Scottish Parliament, a multi-agency Homelessness Task Force (2000; 2002) was convened to review the homelessness legislation, which had been in place since 1977. The aim was to ensure that a modernised framework was appropriate for helping homeless people in the 21st Century. A key element of the review (Homelessness Task Force, 2000; 2002) was revision of the four longstanding 'tests' of eligibility for assistance with housing:

1. *Is the household homeless?* The Task Force retained the established broad definition of homelessness as 'having no reasonable accommodation'.

2. *Is the household in priority need?* Households considered to have priority need included those with a pregnant woman or dependent children; those homeless in an emergency; and those considered 'vulnerable' due to at least one of a complex range of characteristics (Scottish Executive, 2005, pp.41-42). This test had created a significant divide in eligibility for assistance, with considerable local discretion in decision making on vulnerability (discussed by Bretherton, Hunter and Johnsen, 2013 in the English case). The Homelessness Task Force recommended the abolition of this test so that all households who met the legal definition of homelessness would have equal priority under the legislation.

3. *Is the household 'intentionally' homeless?* The Task Force also recommended revision of this test of whether a deliberate act or omission resulted in homelessness, so that homeless households would be supported to address any behaviour which might be considered intentional homelessness.

4. *Does the household have a 'local connection' to the authority where they are applying for assistance?* The Task Force also recommended abolition of this test, which allowed referral to another area depending on relative strength of local connection through family, residence, employment or similar ties.

The vision of the Homelessness Task Force (2002) was that there would effectively be only one test of eligibility for housing assistance – *is the household legally homeless?* It was in this respect that the review came close to recommending a legal right to housing for all (Anderson and Serpa, 2013), with parallel recommendations on meeting care and support needs and tackling poverty as a driver of homelessness. The Scottish Executive was recognised by the United Nations for its contribution to human rights and dignity in relation to this homelessness policy review (Goodlad, 2005).

Early recommendations of the Task Force were taken forward as part of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (Figure 1), demonstrating commitment to a strategic approach to homelessness, enshrined in law. However, the change to the definition of home-

lessness to exclude those with accommodation overseas questioned the eligibility of migrant households who became homeless in Scotland – a theme that would re-emerge in the subsequent review and a significant point of tension with reserved powers of the Westminster Parliament. Other than this, the new provisions conveyed enhanced entitlement to assistance for those experiencing homelessness.

Figure 1: Homelessness provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001

Sections	The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
1	Local authorities to produce a homelessness strategy (subsequently incorporated into local housing strategies)
2	Local authorities to ensure freely available homelessness advice services (taken forward in the Homeless Persons Advice and Assistance (Scotland) Regulations 2002)
3	Changes to the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 Definition of homelessness to exclude those with reasonable accommodation overseas Unintentionally homeless people entitled to permanent accommodation, as defined in the Act People can be assessed as 'threatened with homelessness' within 2 months (increased from 28 days) Right to temporary accommodation whilst enquiries are made, for anyone assessed as homeless All homeless people entitled to a minimum of temporary accommodation, advice and assistance Accommodation offered must be reasonable to occupy and meet any special needs of the applicant Local authorities to have regard to the best interests of children in exercising their functions.
4	Applicants have right of internal review of a decision
5	Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to comply with local authority request to provide accommodation for a homeless household ('Section 5 referral')
6	Procedures for arbitration between local authority and registered social landlord
7	Ministerial power on subsequent regulations for hostels and short-term accommodation

Source: Amended from Scottish Government (2019a, pp.116-7).

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 also introduced a single tenancy arrangement (the Scottish Secure Tenancy) across local authorities and housing associations/ Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), effectively confirming a unified 'social rented sector', which would continue to play a crucial role in resolving homelessness. Despite some continuing decline through sales, demolition and lack of new investment, the social rented sector still constituted almost 30% of the Scottish housing stock at 2001 (Stephens *et al*., 2019, p.111, Table 17b).

The final Homelessness Task Force report made 59 recommendations for policy and practice, a number of which translated into further legislative change (Homelessness Task Force, 2002; Figure 2). Notably, the package of measures

strengthened the homelessness legislation in comparison to the other UK jurisdictions of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with recommendations which would deliver what was broadly regarded as a legal right to housing by 2012.

Figure 2: Provisions of the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003

Sections	Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003
1, 2, 3, 5 and 6	Ministerial powers and duties relating to abolition of the priority need test (taken forward in The Homelessness (Abolition of Priority Need Test) (Scotland) Order 2012)
4	Local Authority discretionary power, rather than duty, to investigate whether a household is intentionally homeless (not implemented by 2012, but came into force on 7 November 2019 by virtue of The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 (Commencement No. 4) Order 2019, discussed below)
7	Accommodation provided for asylum seekers under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 does not constitute accommodation of the applicants' own choice so does not establish a local connection
8	Ministerial power to restrict referral of a homeless applicant to another local authority in certain circumstances (local connection – not commenced until 7 November 2019 by virtue of The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 (Commencement No. 4) Order 2019, see below)
9	Ministerial power to specify accommodation that is not suitable as temporary accommodation (taken forward by The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014)
10	Replace references to domestic "violence" with references to domestic "abuse", to include behaviour other than physical violence
11	Landlords and mortgage lenders to notify the local authority when they raise repossession proceedings
12	Sheriffs to consider reasonableness in repossession proceedings where rent arrears are due to a delay or failure in Housing Benefit

Source: Amended from Scottish Government (2019a, pp.117-8).

The agreed implementation date for completion of these changes was 31 December 2012 (referred to as the '2012 target'). During this period, Scottish Government acquiesced to local-level resistance to changing the tests on intentional homelessness and local connection. These sections were not enacted by 2012, resulting in some dilution of the original vision of the review (Anderson and Serpa, 2013). As will be discussed below, the 2017-18 review would revisit these recommendations (Figure 2 above, sections 4 and 8). However, even on its own, the abolition of the priority/non-priority division represented a significant enhancement in equality of rights under the homelessness legislation in Scotland. Working age adults who did not have dependent children in their care and had been most likely to be considered as not 'vulnerable', not in priority need (and therefore only entitled to advice and assistance, rather than an offer of housing) were brought into the legal safety net for housing assistance by this policy change (Anderson and Serpa, 2013).

Such a strong legal framework raised practical challenges of helping homeless people into settled housing. There were early indications that without an expanded supply of affordable housing, an unintended outcome of the strengthening of the legislation would be that some homeless households would spend more time in temporary accommodation (Anderson and Serpa, 2013, p.34). Pressures on housing stock also resulted in acceptance of a 12-month private sector tenancy as 'settled accommodation' for homeless people, even though this was a less secure outcome than a Scottish Secure Tenancy in the social rented sector (Figure 3, 2010 regulations). Analysis also emphasised the need for continued monitoring of homelessness outcomes. Importantly, parallel developments in homelessness prevention needed to be monitored to ensure they focused on tackling the root causes of homelessness, rather than 'gatekeeping' access to the strong legal safety net. Nonetheless, the modernised homelessness framework was regarded as a progressive policy review and an early indicator of Scottish 'nation building' (Anderson and Serpa, 2013).

Figure 3: 2010-2012 additional legislative change

Year	Legislative Change
2010	The Homeless Persons (Provision of Non-permanent Accommodation) (Scotland) Regulations 2010 prescribed two sets of circumstances in which local authorities can provide non-permanent accommodation to homeless applicants who otherwise would be entitled to permanent accommodation: where an applicant requires housing support services which it is not appropriate to provide within permanent accommodation where a short assured tenancy in the private sector can be made available with various conditions fulfilled. [Short Assured Tenancies were subsequently replaced by Private Residential Tenancies with the introduction of the Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016].
2010-12	The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 commenced reforms to reduce the scope of the right to buy social housing and introduced a duty on local authorities to conduct a housing support assessment for applicants who were unintentionally homeless, where there was reason to believe housing support services were needed (taken forward in The Housing Support Services (Homelessness)(Scotland) Regulations 2012).
2012	The Homelessness (Abolition of Priority Need Test) (Scotland) Order 2012 abolished the priority need test for homeless households. From 31st December 2012, all unintentionally homeless households were entitled to settled accommodation.

Source: Scottish Government (2019a, p.118).

Post-crisis Austerity and Continuing Homelessness – the Roots of Further Review?

The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 was introduced in a time of relative prosperity across the UK, and certainly in a period of policy optimism in Scotland with its newly devolved responsibilities. By 2008, the UK was engulfed in what was to become known as the Global Financial Crisis (GFC). The failure (and subsequent nationalisation) of a major Scottish Bank was a significant factor in the UK'S experience of the GFC, indicating both the global significance of Scotland's financial institutions and the associated risk of excessive and unregulated marketisation and the financialisation of housing (Financial Services Authority, 2011; Ryan-Collins, 2019). As in many other European countries, the financial crisis precipitated tough austerity measures in Scotland, largely driven by the Westminster UK government, which cut public expenditure to reduce the public sector deficit, disproportionately impacting upon poorer households (Institute for Policy Research, 2015).

At least ten major welfare reforms were implemented in the United Kingdom between 2010 and 2015, a number of which interacted with housing and homelessness for low-income groups:

1. Local Housing Allowance changes to assistance for low-income households in the private rented sector
2. Housing Benefit claw back for under-occupation in the social rented sector (known as 'the bedroom tax')
3. Increases in deductions from benefits for expected contributions from 'non-dependent' household members
4. A cap on total benefits payments per household
5. Reductions in the entitlement of working age claimants to Council Tax Support
6. Replacement of Disability Living Allowance with Personal Independence Payment, with more stringent medical tests
7. Incapacity Benefit replaced by Employment and Support Allowance with more stringent medical tests and greater conditionality of benefit terms
8. Three-year freeze on Child Benefit and its withdrawal from households with a high income
9. Reductions in payment rates for Tax Credits and reduced eligibility for Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit

10. Uprating of benefits limited to 1%, for three years for most working-age benefits (two years for Child Benefit and the Local Housing Allowance) (Beatty and Forthergill, 2018, p.951).

Welfare Reform was further complicated by a number of key benefits being repackaged as 'Universal Credit', and benefit sanctions were applied where recipients failed to meet particular criteria, for example on seeking work (Reeve, 2017). Beatty and Forthergill's (2018) impact analysis of the ten changes above indicated that the largest reductions to household income arose from changes to Tax Credits, Child Benefit, and the 1% benefit uprating limit as these affected very large numbers of households (p.954). Welfare reforms impacted mainly on adults of working age (16–64) (p.957); and those geographical areas where the population profile disproportionately included benefit recipients (including older industrial areas of Scotland) were hit hardest by change (p.957). Despite the hardship caused to the poorest households, savings to the Treasury fell short of what was anticipated (p.963).

Benefit rules applied across the UK, but the uneven impact of reform was 'an uncomfortable reality that needs to be logged by government' (Beatty and Fothergill, 2018, p.963). Moreover, financial losses in the poorest places likely exceeded spending on policies to strengthen local and regional economies and evidence from an exploratory study in Scotland suggested welfare reforms had not delivered lower numbers on benefit or higher numbers in employment (Beatty and Fothergill, 2018).

Scotland fared poorly from Welfare Reform, even though the devolved administration did not pass the reduction in Council Tax Support on to claimants and the Scottish Government fully mitigated the impact of the "bedroom tax" through Discretionary Housing Payments (Beatty and Fothergill, 2018, p.954). Such measures, however, resulted in reductions in other devolved budgets. The Scottish Government imposed a Council Tax freeze on its 32 local authorities from 2008-09 until 2016-17, constraining their capacity to raise funding for local service provision (Scottish Government, 2018). The freeze only ended with the 2017-18 Local Government Finance settlement, but with Council Tax increases still capped at 3 per cent. Anderson, Dyb and Finnerty (2016) also identified significant cuts to welfare and public expenditure in Scotland in their comparison of the impact of the 2008 financial crisis on homelessness in Scotland, Ireland and Norway. While national survey data confirmed the key role of household-level poverty in the generation of homelessness, Scotland faced a slow pace of economic recovery combined with the impact of welfare and housing reform (Fitzpatrick *et al*., 2015).

The Scottish government promoted homelessness prevention during this austerity period, acknowledging that it would not be feasible to 'build a way out of homelessness' (Anderson, Dyb and Finnerty, 2016, p.116). Indeed, by 2015, house building levels were well below their 2007 peak and social housing completions fell by 44%

between 2010 and 2014, to just 3217 in 2014 (Powell *et al*., 2015). The Scottish Government had aimed to build 6000 affordable dwellings per year over 2011-2016, while the estimated affordable housing requirement for Scotland was 12014 dwellings per annum over five years (Powell *et al*., 2015). Figure 4 summarises further legislative change during this period. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 gave greater discretion to social landlords in terms of who should be prioritised for housing, but also announced the full abolition of the 'Right to Buy' in order to preserve the remaining social housing stock. The Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016 provided for modernisation of the terms of private rented tenancies in parallel with policy goals to better support access to private renting for lower income households.

Figure 4: Legislative change 2014-2016

Year	Legislative Change
2014	**The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014** established a legal framework for the integration of health and social care services in Scotland. Health Boards and local authorities to delegate some statutory functions and budgets to the Integration Authority. Homelessness services *may* be delegated, but this is not compulsory.
2014	**Housing (Scotland) Act, 2014** did not introduce new provisions on homelessness but amended provisions for the allocation of social rented housing and announced full abolition of tenants Right to Buy social rented housing from 2016.
2014	**The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014** superseded the 2004 Order and prescribed accommodation which may not be used to fulfil the homelessness duty in relation to households which include a pregnant woman or children.
2016	**Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016** introduced a new type of tenancy (private residential tenancy) for the private rented sector in Scotland to replace the short assured tenancy and assured tenancy for all future lets.

Source: Amended from Scottish Government (2019a, pp.118-9).

In this period, homelessness policy was overseen by a Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group (HPSG) with representation from central and local government (housing, health and social care services), third sector service providers and homelessness charities. The group had a brief to embed homelessness prevention activity in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2015a). Scotland's Housing Options (housing advice) approach was criticised by the Scottish Housing Regulator (2014) for lack of clarity in relation to the legal homelessness system. In addition, research by Mackie and Thomas (2015) revealed that 80% of approaches to homelessness prevention services were from single people, who remained more likely than families to become homeless, to experience drug/alcohol dependency or mental health issues, to be temporarily accommodated in hostels or Bed and Breakfast (B&Bs) and to wait longer for settled accommodation. Revised Housing Options guidance was issued in 2016 (Scottish Government, 2016a).

Despite austerity, Scotland achieved a reduction in recorded homelessness in the five years up to 2015 associated with homelessness prevention (Fitzpatrick *et al*., 2015; Scottish Government, 2015a; Scottish Government, 2015b) and indicating some resilience in the homelessness framework (Anderson, Dyb and Finnerty, 2016). Yet homelessness persisted at a significant level, time in temporary accommodation increased and use of new services such as food banks emerged in the austerity period (Anderson, Dyb and Finnerty, 2016). In 2015-16, 34 662 homelessness applications were recorded in Scotland, of which 16 395 were assisted into settled housing, following assessment (Scottish Government, 2016a). However, Scottish Government (2015a, 2015b; 2016b) acknowledged that while some reduction in homelessness had been achieved through homelessness prevention strategies, further large reductions were unlikely, with two thirds of homeless applicants already having been through the housing options service. Similarly, the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation remained substantial at 10 555 households on 31 March 2016, only slightly lower than the 11 254 recorded in 2011. The reasons for recorded homelessness remained closely linked to the breakdown of a relationship or the breakdown of living arrangements in shared accommodation, reflecting a lack of alternative housing availability (Scottish Government, 2015b) and the proportion of applicants reporting needs for support beyond housing increased from 34% in 2012/13 to 42% in 2015/16 (Scottish Government, 2016b).

A key challenge, which emerged in this period, was the lack of accurate data on what appeared to be a growing crisis of street homelessness. Homeless people who applied for assistance were asked if they had previously slept rough but the Scottish Government did not maintain distinct rough sleeping counts (Anderson, Dyb and Finnerty, 2016). The separate Scottish Household Survey indicated rough was sleeping experienced by as many as 5 000 persons a year with around 660 people (mostly men) sleeping rough on a typical night (Fitzpatrick *et al*., 2015). The modernised rights based approach to homelessness in Scotland had not effectively addressed the most acute forms of street homelessness, often experienced by people with highly complex health and social care needs (Macias Balda, 2016), precipitating considerable public health interest in homelessness in Scotland (Hetherington and Hamlet, 2015; Tweed, 2017). During this austerity period, Scotland's homelessness statistics did not fully reflect the evident street homelessness crisis, which was highly visible to the public and mass media, as adequate data on street homelessness had not been collected. A focus for new action gradually emerged with non-government agencies and informed citizens (see, for example, Social Bite, 2019) highlighting the state's apparent failure to resolve acute homelessness experienced by people with complex health and social care needs.

Political concern led to an influential enquiry by the Scottish Parliament's Local Government and Communities Committee (2018), which gathered research and expert evidence from across the homelessness policy community and made recommendations to the Scottish Government. The report addressed causes of homelessness; tackling and preventing homelessness; temporary accommodation; and future service options for those with complex needs (including Housing First and learning from Finland). A key finding that the true level of rough sleeping was unclear meant it was difficult to ensure that appropriate services were in place to assist those facing street homelessness (Para 196). More accurate information on rough sleeping was required to assist in identifying the barriers and potential solutions to supporting people into accommodation (Scottish Parliament Local Government and Communities Committee, 2018).

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG)

Set up in 2017 to report to Scottish Government, the multi-agency 'Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group' included very strong representation from the non-government organisation (NGO) sector (Scottish Government, 2019b). Crisis and Shelter Scotland represented two UK-wide homelessness charities, alongside other established Scottish NGOs: Glasgow Homeless Network (now Homeless Network Scotland), Social Bite (a social business with a mission to end homelessness), Glasgow Simon Community/Streetwork and Street Soccer. Public sector statutory agencies were represented by Glasgow City Council and the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers (ALACHO). The other members were Queens Cross Housing Association (RSL), The Church of Scotland, Govan Law Centre (provides independent legal advice) and the academic sector, represented by Heriot-Watt University.

The group focused on four key questions (COSLA and Scottish Government, 2018, p.7).

1. What can be done to reduce rough sleeping this winter (2017-18)?
2. How can we end rough sleeping?
3. How can we transform the use of temporary accommodation?
4. What needs to be done to end homelessness?

The group produced early recommendations to address rough sleeping in 2017-18 (HARSAG, 2017) and developed a series of working papers across five work streams: measuring rough sleeping (HARSAG, 2018a), frontline support (HARSAG, 2018b), legal reform (HARSAG, 2018c); prevention (HARSAG, 2018d) and access to

housing (HARSAG, 2018e). While there was some repetition/duplication of issues across these outputs, this also indicated the significance of issues crossing over work programme areas and a degree of triangulation of problem identification, evidence and proposed solutions.

Measuring rough sleeping. HARSAG (2018a) clarified shortcomings that contributed to the crisis of rough sleeping, despite the strong legal framework:

> 'current data collection and recording on rough sleeping does not support joint working at the case level, and is not complete enough to be as effective as it could be in service or policy planning and design, or on tracking trends and measuring the impacts of policy and practice change'(p1).

A key issue was that recorded homelessness only gave a partial picture of rough sleeping at the point that people made a homelessness application to a local authority. HARSAG identified scope to develop a system similar to the 'CHAIN' approach in London, where data sharing between agencies enabled regular reporting of numbers, locations and other data to support monitoring the reduction in rough sleeping (2018a, p.5).

Front line support. The review recognised that staff across homelessness services required further training to be confident in responding positively to homeless people in a wide range of circumstances and to effectively deliver accommodation and support solutions which met their needs (HARSAG, 2018b).

Legal reform. The group revisited the 2003 proposals to abolish the tests of intentional homelessness and local connection which had not been implemented (HARSAG, 2018c, p.4, and Figure 2 above). The case to fully implement the Homelessness, etc., (Scotland) Act 2003 was made on the basis that removing barriers for people who were sleeping rough (or at risk of doing so) outweighed any perceived perverse incentives in accessing homelessness services. To further strengthen the existing legal framework, HARSAG (2018c, p.2) recommended examining the case for a homelessness prevention duty, learning from recent experience in England and Wales. Updating the 2005 code of guidance on homelessness legislation was considered a necessary element of legal reform and HARSAG argued that 'cost savings' should be demonstrable from reduced homelessness achieved through new legislation.

Homelessness prevention. The aim of ending rough sleeping was clarified as 'to get to zero and sustain this' (HARSAG, 2018d, p.1). The need to address 'predictable' routes to homelessness was recognised, including leaving institutions (prison, care, hospital, armed forces) and tackling known risks of homelessness (domestic abuse, childhood poverty, adverse childhood and youth experiences, using alcohol and drugs, lacking recourse to public funds, relationship breakdown, eviction and

rent arrears). The paper recognised strengths in the framework and innovative local practice (p.9) and concurred with the proposed consideration of a legal 'prevention duty', drawing on the approach developed in Wales (Mackie, 2015), further involving social security and a wide range of public services, and ensuring preventive 'housing options' were available (p.11).

Access to housing. The action group acknowledged 'overwhelming' evidence supporting more rapid rehousing and Housing First, largely informed by an international evidence review on what works to end rough sleeping (Mackie, Johnsen and Wood, 2017; HARSAG, 2018e). A key recommendation was for local authorities to produce Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans to deliver a transformation in the temporary accommodation sector (Watts *et al*., 2018) and faster routes to secure tenancies in ordinary housing within communities. Other evidence-informed proposals included agreeing a definition of affordable housing in Scotland and the adoption of person centred, psychologically and trauma informed approaches to homelessness services. Importantly, this paper raised the issue of homeless people subject to immigration control (including asylum seekers and some other visa categories) who may have no access to welfare benefits and no recourse to public funds. This crucial theme to emerge throughout the 2017-18 review largely related to UK Parliament reserved powers over Immigration, with Scotland having no effective power to amend law in this sphere.

Valuing lived experience of homelessness. Working with homeless people was embedded in the review through the ''Can we fix homelessness in Scotland? Aye[1] we can'' project (Glasgow Homeless Network, 2018). This national consultation with 425 people with experience of homelessness identified clear preferences for safe, secure, affordable housing and choice in location. Homeless people did not want to live in temporary accommodation, but sought access to their own home as quickly as possible. They also required services to work together and for staff to be respectful, approachable, and understand the complexities of homelessness.

HARSAG's interim report (2018f) set out a potential programme across the five work streams, and an early recommendation on putting in place measures to protect people with no recourse to public funds from destitution. The interim report set out 28 recommendations across seven key themes:

1. Prevention of predictable homelessness
2. Prevention of homelessness from known risks
3. Quickly help people sleeping rough into settled accommodation
4. 'Make temporary accommodation the stop-gap it was meant to be'

[1] 'Aye' is a Scottish vernacular term for 'yes'.

5. Ensure adequate housing provision and access
6. Ensure the legislative framework fits with other recommendations
7. Improve measuring and monitoring of rough sleeping.

The final report to Scottish Government defined the goal of ending homelessness in Scotland as:

- No one sleeping rough
- No one forced to live in transient or dangerous accommodation such as tents, squats and non-residential buildings
- No one living in emergency accommodation such as shelters and hostels without a plan for rapid rehousing into affordable, secure and decent accommodation
- No one homeless as a result of leaving a state institution such as prison or the care system
- Everyone at immediate risk of homelessness gets the help they need to prevent it happening (HARSAG, 2018g, pp.4-5).

Although this perhaps does not imply that 'no one ever needs to apply to a local authority as homeless or threatened with homelessness', it nonetheless sets a high threshold for homelessness prevention and alleviation, covering most of FEANTSA's ETHOS categories of homelessness and housing exclusion (FEANTSA, 2019). A further 29 recommendations (plus sub-recommendations) were set out across five revised themes in the final report:

1. The need to address wider causes of homelessness: poverty, welfare reform, housing supply, migrant homelessness
2. Early intervention with high risk groups
3. Effective responses to those facing crisis, including the importance of collaborative working
4. Recommendations for local housing strategies and the assessment of housing need and demand
5. A wider societal and government approach to homelessness.

Consideration of the HARSAG review by Scottish Government was quickly followed up with the launch of an action plan to end homelessness.

The Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan

Launched in November 2018, ownership of the 'Ending Homelessness Together' action plan sits with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and the Scottish Government, though its content acknowledges the Scottish Parliament Local Government and Communities Committee report on homelessness (2018) and responds to '70' recommendations from the HARSAG review programme. The Action Plan built upon Scottish Government's renewed commitment to tackle homelessness in the 2017 Programme for Government (COSLA and Scottish Government, 2018, p.3), with continuing coordination of implementation through the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group (p.4) and with partnership across housing, health, education, social work, community support, social justice and the third sector.

With a fundamental vision that 'Everyone has a home that meets their needs and homelessness is ended' (COSLA and Scottish Government, 2018, p.10), the action plan publicly acknowledged the 'need to get better at knowing how many people are actually homeless'. Underpinned by the core National Performance Framework value, to 'treat all our people with kindness, dignity and compassion' (p.13), the action plan restated analysis and actions on:

1. Person centred approaches across public services
2. Preventing homelessness from happening
3. Prioritising settled housing for all
4. Responding quickly and effectively whenever homelessness happens
5. Joining up planning and resources, and,
6. Other supporting actions.

While it is not feasible to discuss all evidence and actions, some innovative strands are worthy of comment. The plan very strongly supports person centred approaches across public services (COSLA and Scottish Government, 2018, pp.14-17), based on a broad acceptance of structural drivers of homelessness (Bramley *et al*., 2019). Recognition that the proportion of homeless households with one or more support needs had increased to 47% at 2017-18 (COSLA and Scottish Government, 2018, p.14) indicated the need for additional resources to support front line workers (p.17). On preventing homelessness, the plan focused on the lack of supply of affordable housing (p.20) and the proposal to introduce a legal homelessness prevention duty (pp.21 and 23), which would mark a significant change to the Scottish framework. Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans for all Scottish local authorities were introduced alongside ambitious goals to ensure tenancy sustainment and housing support; to

make it easy for people to access their right to assistance; and to bring about cultural change to improve joint working (p.22). The plan incorporated a commitment to pursue welfare and social security issues with the UK Government (p.23).

The number of households in temporary accommodation had increased to 10933 at 31 March 2018 (p.24) and the plan announced that Housing First Pathfinder Projects were to be developed from 2018-19 in five local authorities, supported by £6.5m of Scottish Government funding and £3.5m partnership funding from Social Bite (pp.26-27). Although there was no clear definition of 'rapid' for the local authority rehousing plans, £15m was available to support implementation from Scottish Government's five-year Ending Homelessness fund, with the first tranche announced in August 2019 (Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) News, 2019). Allocations ranged from £22 000 for Orkney Islands to £1.3m for Edinburgh City. Only two councils (Glasgow and Edinburgh) received more than £1 million with nearly half (14) receiving between £100 000 and £250 000 for initial implementation of Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans (SFHA, 2019). The national Action Plan embraced a wider goal to 'transform the landscape of temporary accommodation' by 2023 (p.26), including a proposed new funding framework to ensure lower rents as part of tackling poverty and work disincentives (p.28). Time spent in temporary accommodation varied across different types of accommodation. Although most hostel placements were around 12 weeks, and B&B stays tended to be a week or less, some stays in temporary accommodation lasted six months to a year (COSLA and Scottish Government, 2018, p.30).

The Action Plan followed through quickly on commitments to implement the intentionality and local connection provisions of the 2003 Act, some 13 years after the law had been passed (Figures 2 above, and 5 below). Scottish Government (2019c) consulted on local connection and intentionality proposals during January to April 2019. Responses were mixed but sufficiently in favour of the proposed direction of change, to go ahead. Intentionality provisions announced later in 2019 would come into force immediately, while the Local Connection changes would be taken forward through a further statement within 12 months. Similarly, by September 2019 an announcement had been made limiting time spent in Bed and Breakfast accommodation to a maximum 7 days, for all household types (Scottish Housing News, 2019).

Figure 5: Legislative Change 2017-2019

Year	Legislative Change
2017	**The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2017** – for families with children or pregnant women, amends the time limit in article 7 of the 2014 Order from 14 days to 7 days. The aim is to minimise the amount of time families with pregnant women and children should spend in bed and breakfast accommodation, and reduce the time to a maximum of 7 days, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
2019	**The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 (Commencement No. 4) Order 2019, which commenced on 7 November 2019** brings into force sections 4 and 8 of the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act") gives local authorities the discretion to investigate for intentionality as a power, rather than a duty modifies the operation of local connection referral of a homeless applicant to another local authority in certain circumstances (within 12 months, Ministers to consult and set out criteria for modifications).

Source: Scottish Government (2019a, pp.119-20).

Joining up planning and resources (COSLA and Scottish Government, 2018, p.35) appeared one of the most challenging strands for the Action Plan, which lacked clarity on joining up budgets. That said, Scottish Government had allocated more than £3 billion to deliver at least 35 000 homes for social rent in the same Parliamentary term (COSLA and Scottish Government, 2018, p.3). In addition, the £50 million Ending Homelessness Together fund would support local authorities and partners to deliver on the plan over five years from 2018-19 (p.5). Overall monitoring of the Action Plan rested with the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group, chaired by the Housing Minister. The first annual report indicated positive progress on 39 out of 49 actions (COSLA and Scottish Government, 2020, p.2), with ten of these fully completed and plans in place to progress the remaining ten actions over the longer term. The 2020 and subsequent annual reports to the Scottish Parliament will be more fully analysed in a future edition of the Journal. The following sections complete the discussion of the action plan development phase and draw initial conclusions on the prospects for ending homelessness in Scotland.

Discussion: the Potential to End Homelessness by 2023?

As at January 2020, the Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan had completed its preliminary phase of implementation potentially redefining the Scottish homelessness model to achieve an even higher threshold of homelessness prevention and rapid resolution. If successful, could this be understood as effectively 'ending homelessness'?

Some very clear progress was made in the first year of the action plan, notably commencing measures to abolish the 'tests' of intentional homelessness and local connection which were introduced in 1977, and whose abolition by 2012 was 'shied

away from'. The HARSAG review and the Action Plan also achieved publication of an updated code of guidance for homelessness practice (Scottish Government, 2019), another measure which had been resisted since 2005.

Training and support for the frontline workforce could prove much more challenging to implement. Some early resources emerged, such as the Housing First Scotland (2019) guidance, but the adequacy of planned training for frontline staff was still not clear. While high-level policy objectives may drive a cultural change, it is also likely that real increases in staffing numbers will be required in order to ensure the capacity to deliver the desired person centred approach. The Ending Homelessness Fund should go some way towards achieving this.

The proposed legal duty to prevent homelessness marked something of a 'reversal of lesson learning' from England and Wales to the Scottish context. However, it should be noted that the Welsh duty to prevent signifies:

> 'no duty to provide accommodation; instead, the duty is to provide assistance to retain existing accommodation or assistance to find alternative accommodation within the housing market. People will have a right to assistance not to housing'
>
> (Mackie, 2015, p.57).

Scotland may require to develop its own approach to an effective prevention duty, which ensures settled accommodation as an outcome. Nevertheless, ensuring the duty rests across public services (not just with housing) could be a major step towards more realistically joining up collaborative working on homelessness.

New national rough sleeping data collection and equality proofing practice for protected characteristics should be readily achievable, but are required rapidly to enhance information for monitoring outcomes. The development of a new framework for temporary accommodation addressing funding, range of accommodation, and standards could be more challenging in terms of the degree of embedded path dependency in the current system, which would require disruption to achieve change.

Tensions remain between the Scottish and Westminster Parliaments, notably in terms of influencing UK Social Security policy, despite some further devolution of welfare powers to Scotland. Moreover with Britain due to leave the European Union in January 2020 on a platform of 'taking back control of Britain's borders', the realistic prospect of influencing UK immigration policy in the sphere of 'no recourse to public funds' also seems remote.

The pace of change to deliver on HARSAG and the Ending Homelessness Action Plan appears substantially more ambitious compared to the earlier Homelessness Task Force review. The Task Force commissioned 14 distinct research studies, while HARSAG was able to draw rapidly on an existing evidence base. Both were

ambitious in terms of final recommendations (50 from the Task Force and a combined 70 from HARSAG) with all accepted by the governments of the day in both cases. Co-production with homeless people had moved on very significantly since 2002, with the Glasgow Homeless Network (2018) 'Aye we can' project contributing significantly to policy review and the value of the lived experience of homeless people much more embedded in the 2018 Action Plan.

Across the policy community, there appear to be few dissenting voices on the direction of the latest review, although Taylor (2019), in a practitioner journal, commented that the goal to end homelessness was 'a bold claim and one it seems the programme will struggle to live up to' (p.24). Focusing mainly on the Housing First programme, Taylor reported that some Scottish housing providers had expressed concern about the level of funding for the required support, given that local authorities and health boards had cut budgets in the face of austerity. Long-term support was being 'promised' but budgets were still set annually and there was a need to ensure mental health and support services were adequately funded.

Scotland's 2018-23 Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan is hugely ambitious, and appropriately so, given the nation's claim to lead the world on homelessness policy. This new phase of legislation and strategy seeks to deliver a truly comprehensive, person centred, approach to meeting homeless people's needs across housing and welfare service provision. The plan is due to be delivered within five years (compared to ten years for implementation of the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003, with a shift towards 'SMART' (specific, measureable, achievable, realistic and timed) objectives and an emerging monitoring framework, for annual reporting to Scottish Parliament (COSLA and Scottish Goverrnment, 2020).

With hindsight, the question could be asked as to whether the Scottish homelessness policy community had lost some momentum around 2016? For example, online information suggested a lull in formal strategy meetings from August 2016 until March 2018, after which the review period saw eight meetings of the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group up to September 2019 (Scottish Government, 2019d). Motivation for the 2017-18 review does appear to have been driven by voluntary sector lobbying from an ever improving and reliable research evidence base. There seems to have been a strong impetus/pressure from established 'insider' NGOs (Grant, 2000) and from the cross-party Parliamentary Committee, compared to the 2000-2002 review which was a high priority within the then Scottish Executive. Going forward, HSPG retains a remit to 'bring about positive change for those experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness in Scotland', taking joint ownership of the goal of ending homelessness in Scotland, and demonstrating measurable progress towards that goal (Scottish Government, 2019d).

The goal of joining up services and resources is not new, with only limited progress over the lifetime of the Scottish Parliament. Similarly, homelessness prevention has been a priority since at least 2009, again with limited success. Delivering direct routes to settled housing for known risk groups, other than through 'the homelessness route' represents another challenge to the embedded, path dependent homelessness system (Anderson, Dyb and Finnerty, 2016). Fundamentally, success will depend on a strong supply of affordable housing, a perennial research and policy analysis conclusion, which finally appears to have been accepted, along with the need to address the whole housing system. By 2017, Scotland's social rented housing sector accounted for only 23% of the total dwelling stock (Stephens *et al*., 2019, p.113, Table 17d), but with augmented national plans and funding for additional new construction.

Early outcomes included production of the local Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans across Scotland, commencement of the Housing First pilots, some further legislative change, and publication of an updated code of guidance on the homelessness legislation. Nonetheless, the Watts *et al*. (2018) report on transforming temporary accommodation highlighted that:

> 'Scottish Government should be cognisant of widespread concerns about the feasibility of current recommendations to transform temporary accommodation and responses to homelessness in Scotland. Key areas requiring attention included: assurances of an adequate supply of affordable housing to facilitate the rapid rehousing model; the availability of resources to fund support for people in and after they leave temporary accommodation to ensure sustainable outcomes; and the need for buy-in across all levels of local authority staff and among relevant third sector and public sector agencies' (p.16).

The Watts *et al*. study concluded that there was still some need to strengthen consensus on the HARSAG proposals across the homelessness sector (p.17).

Arguably, 'soft policy' in the form of financial incentives and good practice guidance was as important a policy tool in the 2018 review, as legislative change. The question remained as to whether the resources in place would prove adequate to achieve meaningful progress towards ending homelessness by 2023. Some further unanswered questions would require more detailed research. Policy review may have been heavily influenced by homelessness interest group politics, but delivery continued to rest largely with statutory local authorities and documentary analysis tells us little about the day-to-day operational challenges they face in implementing the raft of policy and legislative change. The effectiveness of partnership working across statutory and voluntary agencies also merits ongoing scrutiny, and the core need for continued and transparent monitoring concurs strongly with the conclusion of McMordie and Watts (2018) in the context of Northern Ireland.

Conclusions

The documentary analysis conducted for this paper, points to three main conclusions. Firstly, although the Homelessness Task Force review (2000, 2002) was in many ways ground breaking, it wasn't fully implemented and failed to adequately deal with the most excluded groups experiencing street homelessness. While the legislation proved reasonably resilient, the overall housing supply and sector workforce were negatively affected by the great financial crisis and post-2010 austerity measures further constrained implementation of the 2003 legislation. Second, the HARSAG review and Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan recognised these gaps in earlier policy implementation and proposed an even more ambitious and inclusive approach, with a key focus on ending rough sleeping and reducing time in temporary accommodation. Third, early implementation appeared to reflect a high level of political commitment from Scottish Government (e.g. the Homelessness Strategy and Prevention Group was chaired by the Housing Minister), combined with broad support across the statutory and voluntary housing and homelessness sectors. In power since 2007, the Scottish National Party government had 'inherited' the earlier 2012 target from the previous Labour-Liberal Democrat coalition, but 'owned' the 2018 Action Plan, jointly with the local government sector.

Looking to 2023, Scotland still needs an Ending Homelessness Action Plan in order to more effectively deliver a 'Right to Housing', by filling the gaps in the earlier policy review and building the social rented homes which did not materialise in the years of austerity from 2010-2018. Even 'world leading policy' will require periodic review and Scotland now needs to demonstrate 'world leading delivery' of equal rights to housing for all. So will homelessness will be ended by in Scotland by 2023? The optimistic answer is 'possibly'. Such a positive outcome would depend on some important differences of ambition between the current action plan and the 2002 Task Force, as well as developments in the wider political and economic climate.

One highly significant change has been the simple commitment to increased housing supply both in Scotland and across the UK more generally. With the Scottish commitment to building 50 000 new homes by 2021 (including 35 000 social rented homes), expanded housing supply may well prove a critical defining factor in relieving the wider housing crisis, with a positive impact on homelessness up to 2023. The pool of social housing remains a key solution to homelessness in Scotland. The effectiveness of new private residential tenancies as an additional affordable housing resource should become apparent by 2023, but private rent levels may remain significantly higher than the social sector.

2019 also saw some realistic prospect of British public services emerging from the long period of austerity in place since the 2008 financial crisis. Actual outcomes remain to be seen, with the UK government promising investment away from

London and the South East of England. In its election manifesto, the Conservative and Unionist Party (2019) aimed for 'levelling up every part of the UK' (p.26) though it was not clear if this implied a commitment to tackling income inequality. On housing policy for England (pp.29-30), the manifesto heralded help to access home ownership, creating a fairer private rental market and:

> 'a commitment to renewing the Affordable Homes Programme, in order to support the delivery of hundreds of thousands of affordable homes. This is a key part of our efforts to prevent people from falling into homelessness, along with fully enforcing the Homelessness Reduction Act. We will also end the blight of rough sleeping by the end of the next Parliament by expanding successful pilots and programmes such as the Rough Sleeping Initiative and Housing First, and working to bring together local services to meet the health and housing needs of people sleeping on the streets. We will help pay for this by bringing in a stamp duty surcharge on non-UK resident buyers.'
>
> (Conservative and Unionist Party, 2019, p.29)

Reaching a target of 300 000 homes a year by the mid-2020s, would see the UK Government build a million more homes, of all tenures, over the next Parliament (p.31).

Capital resources for additional affordable housing are a necessary, but not sufficient condition for ending homelessness. The other key part of the equation is adequate revenue funding for effective support to help people move out of homelessness and get by in ordinary housing. In Scotland, the acknowledgement of the substantial evidence base on the effectiveness of Housing First marks another key distinction of the 2018 Action Plan from the 2002 Homelessness Task Force Review. However, there remains a requirement for substantial change from longstanding embedded practice in local homelessness services. Revenue funding for housing support needs to be maintained in perpetuity, moving away from short term initiatives towards robust and reliable long term housing support mechanisms. Significant support is needed for Scottish local authorities to move to the rapid rehousing model envisaged by the Ending Homelessness Action Plan. This will be key to meeting the definition of ending homelessness which includes 'a plan for rapid rehousing into affordable, secure and decent accommodation' for everyone in emergency accommodation.

What factors may yet get in the way of ending homelessness by 2023? Working with those without recourse to public funds still represents one of the most significant (or resource intensive) challenges for Scottish Government. Scotland needs to ensure its homelessness interventions are fully accessible to all in need, especially those most vulnerable to sleeping rough. Housing options and homelessness prevention approaches equally need to deliver secure housing outcomes, and

support as needed. And new structures may be required to ensure joined up working across housing, health, care, social security and criminal justice, beyond simply encouraging collaboration. Possibly the most significant determining factor will be the continuing political commitment of the Scottish Government and the homelessness sector to sustain the momentum of HARSAG, the Action Plan, the recognition of lived experience of homelessness, and the high level Ministerial leadership of the Homelessness Strategy and Prevention Group. The first annual report on the action plan confirms such commitment to date (COSLA and Scottish Government, 2020).

Questions remain, of course, as to what will happen in practice, not least in terms of relations between the UK and Scottish Governments. As the dust settled on the December 2019 UK General Election, the convincing SNP victory in Scotland was forebodingly juxtaposed against the achievement of a substantial working majority for the Conservative party UK Government at Westminster. Undoubtedly, core tensions on the reserved governance matters of social security and immigration policy could still constrain full implementation of Scotland's Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan. One response will surely be to campaign for a second referendum on full Scottish independence. In the fervor of a repeat of such high level constitutional action, there is a risk of a classic cycle of policy review (Smith, 1976) resulting in further partial implementation of homelessness policy without ever fully resolving the problem. Scotland would do well to put in place robust mechanisms, to ensure it never again 'takes its eye off the ball' of meeting the housing and support needs of its homeless and other most disadvantaged citizens.

References

Anderson, I. (2004) Housing, Homelessness and the Welfare State in the UK, *European Journal of Housing Policy* 4(3) pp.369-389.

Anderson, I. (2007) Sustainable Solutions to Homelessness: The Scottish Case, *European Journal of Homelessness* 1 pp.163-183.

Anderson, I. and Serpa, R. (2013) The Right to Settled Accommodation for Homeless People in Scotland: a Triumph of Rational Policy Making?, *European Journal of Homelessness* 7(1) pp.13-39.

Anderson, I., Dyb, E. and Finnerty, J. (2016) The 'Arc of Prosperity' Revisited: Homelessness policy change in North Western Europe, *Social Inclusion* 4(4) pp.108-124.

Beatty, C. and Fothergill, S. (2018) Welfare Reform in the UK 2010-16: Expectations, Outcomes and Local Impacts, *Social Policy and Administration* 52(5) pp.950-968.

Bengtsson, B. and Ruonavaara, H. (2010) Introduction to a Special Issue on Path Dependence in Housing, *Housing, Theory and Society* 27(3) pp.193–203.

Berry, K. (2019) *Scotland's Changing Housing Landscape* (Edinburgh: SPICe (Scottish Parliament Information Centre)) online at: https://spice-spotlight.scot/2019/05/15/scotlands-changing-housing-landscape/

Bramley, G., Fitzpatrick, S., Wood, J., Sosenko, F., Blenkinsopp, J., Littlewood, M., Frew, C., Bashar, T., McIntyre, J. and Johnsen, S. (2019) *Hard Edges Scotland* (Lankelly Chase).

Bretherton, J., Hunter, C. and Johnsen, S. (2013) 'You can judge them on how they look…': Homelessness Officers, Medical Evidence and Decision-Making in England, *European Journal of Homelessness* 7(1) pp.69-92.

Conservative and Unionist Party (2019) *Manifesto* (London: Conservatives).

COSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) and Scottish Government (2018) *Ending Homelessness Together: High Level Action Plan* (Edinburgh: COSLA and Scottish Government).

COSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) and Scottish Government (2020) *Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan: Annual Report to Parliament* (Edinburgh: COSLA and Scottish Government).

FEANTSA (2019) *Ethos Typology on Homelessness and Housing Exclusion* (Brussels: FEANTSA).

Financial Services Authority (2011) *The Failure of the Royal Bank of Scotland. Financial Services Authority Board Report* (London: FSA).

Fitzpatrick, S., Pawson, H., Bramley, G., Wilcox, S. and Watts, B. (2015) *The Homelessness Monitor: Scotland* (London: Crisis).

Glasgow Homeless Network (2018) *Can We Fix Homelessness in Scotland? Aye We Can. Final Report* (Glasgow: Glasgow Homeless Network).

Goodlad, R. (2005) Scottish Homelessness Policy: Advancing Social Justice? *Scottish Affairs* 50 pp.86-105.

Grant, W. (2000) *Pressure Groups and British Politics* (Contemporary Political Studies) (London: Palgrave).

HARSAG (Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group) (2017) *Recommendations for reducing rough sleeping this winter (2017)* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

HARSAG (2018a) *Q2 Ending Rough Sleeping Working Paper| Workstream: Measuring Rough Sleeping* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

HARSAG (2018b) *Q2 Ending Rough Sleeping Working Paper| Workstream: Front-line Support* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

HARSAG (2018c) *Q2 Ending Rough Sleeping Working Paper | Workstream: Legal Reform* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

HARSAG (2018d) *Q2 Ending Rough Sleeping Working Paper | Workstream: Prevention* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

HARSAG (2018e) *Q2 Ending Rough Sleeping Working Paper | Workstream: Access to Housing* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

HARSAG (2018f) *Ending Rough Sleeping in Scotland: An Interim Report on the Activity of the HARSAG* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

HARSAG (2018g) *Ending Homelessness The Report on the Final Recommendations of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

Hetherington, K. and Hamlet, N. (2015) *Restoring the Public Health Response to Homelessness in Scotland* (Glasgow: Scottish Public Health Network).

Homelessness Task Force (2000) *Helping Homeless People: Legislative Proposals on Homelessness* (Edinburgh: Scottish Executive).

Homelessness Task Force (2002) *An Action Plan for Prevention and Effective Response. Homelessness Task Force Final Report* (Edinburgh: Scottish Executive).

Housing First Scotland (2019) *Housing First Know-How* (Edinburgh: Chartered Institute of Housing).

Institute for Policy Research (2015) *Alternatives to Austerity* (University of Bath).

Klijn, E. and Koppenjan, J. (2012) Governance Network Theory: Past, Present and Future, *Policy and Politics* 40(4) pp.587-606.

Macías Balda, M. (2016) Complex Needs or Simplistic Approaches? Homelessness Services and People with Complex Needs in Edinburgh, *Social Inclusion* 4(4) pp.28-38.

Mackie, P. (2015) Homelessness Prevention and the Welsh Legal Duty: Lessons for International Policies, *Housing Studies* 30(1) pp.40-59.

Mackie, P., Johnsen, S., and Wood, J. (2017) *Ending Rough Sleeping: What Works? An International Evidence Review* (Crisis: London).

Mackie, P. and Thomas. I. (2015) *Single Homelessness in Scotland* (London: Crisis).

Mahoney, J. (2000) Path Dependence in Historical Sociology, *Theory and Society* 29(4) pp.507–548.

Malpass, P. and Murie, A. (1999) *Housing Policy and Practice* (5th edition) (London: Macmillan).

McMordie, L. and Watts, B. (2018) The Northern Ireland Audit Office Report on Homelessness: A Missed Opportunity, *European Journal of Homelessness* 12(2) pp.77-101.

Melcher, R. and Schwartz. A. (2019) *Policy Analysis as Problem Solving: A Flexible and Evidence-based Framework* (London: Routledge/Taylor Francis).

Merret, S. (1979) *State Housing in Britain* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul).

North, D. C. (1990) *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance. Political Economy of Institutions and Decisions* (New York: Cambridge University Press).

Nutley, S.M., Walter, I. and Davies, H.T.O. (2007) *Using Evidence: How Research Can Inform Public Services* (Bristol: Bristrol University Press).

Powell, R., Dunning, R., Ferrari, E. and McKee, K. (2015) *Affordable Housing Need in Scotland Final Report* (Edinburgh: Shelter Scotland).

Reeve, K. (2017) Welfare Conditionality, Benefit Sanctions and Homelessness in the UK: Ending the 'Something for Nothing Culture' or Punishing the Poor? *Journal of Poverty and Social Justice* 25(1) pp.65-78.

Ryan-Collins, J. (2019) *Why Can't You Afford a Home?* (Cambridge: Polity Press).

Scottish Executive (2005) *Homelessness Code of Guidance* (Edinburgh: Scottish Executive).

Scottish Federation of Housing Associations News (2019) *Rapid Rehousing Funding Distribution*, 21 August.

Scottish Government (2015a) *Housing Options (PREVENT 1) Statistics in Scotland 2014-15* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

Scottish Government (2015b) *Operation of the Homeless Persons Legislation in Scotland 2014-15* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

Scottish Government (2016a) *Housing Options Guidance* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

Scottish Government (2016b) *Operation of the Homeless Persons Legislation in Scotland 2015-16* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

Scottish Government (2018) *Council Tax Reduction in Scotland, 2017-18* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

Scottish Government (2019a) *Code of Guidance on Homelessness. Guidance on Legislation, Policies and Practices to Prevent and Resolve Homelessness. Interim Update* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

Scottish Government (2019b) Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group web pages: https://www.gov.scot/groups/homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-action-group/

Scottish Government (2019c) *Consultation on Local Connection and Intentionality* (Edinburgh: Scottish Government).

Scottish Government (2019d) Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group information https://www.gov.scot/groups/homelessness-prevention-and-strategy-group/

Scottish Housing Regulator (2014) *Housing Options in Scotland: a Thematic Enquiry* (Glasgow: Scottish Housing Regulator).

Scottish Housing News (2019) *Unsuitable Temporary Accommodation Legislation to Cover People Facing Homelessness* (online, 9 September 2019) https://www.scottishhousingnews.com/article/unsuitable-temporary-accommodation-legislation-to-cover-people-facing-homelessness

Scottish Parliament Local Government and Communities Committee (2018) *Report on Homelessness* (Edinburgh: Scottish Parliament).

Smith, B. (1976) *Policy making in British Government* (Oxford: Martin Robertson).

Social Bite (2019) *A Movement to End Homelessness*. https://social-bite.co.uk/

Stephens, M., Perry, J., Wilcox, S., Williams, P. and Young, G. (eds) (2019) *UK Housing Review 2019* (Coventry: Chartered Institute of Housing).

Stoker, G. (1988) Governance as Theory: Five Propositions, *International Social Science Journal* 50(155) pp.17-28.

Taylor, M. (2019) The Right Solution? *Inside Housing* 9 August 2019 p.23-24.

Tweed, E. (2017) *Foundations for Well-being: Reconnecting Public Health and Housing. A Practical Guide to Improving Health and Reducing Inequalities* (Scottish Public Health Network (ScotPHN)).

Watts, B., Littlewood, M., Blenkinsopp, J. and Jackson, F. (2018) *Temporary Accommodation in Scotland: Final Report* (Edinburgh: Heriot Watt University).

United Kingdom and Scottish Legislation. All cited legislation can be accessed at legislation.gov.uk: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/

Research Notes

Part D

Social Policy Challenges for Homeless People with Mental Illness: Views of Greek Mental Health Professionals

Panagiota Fitsiou and Nikos Kourachanis

Society of Social Psychiatry and Mental Health
Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences

Abstract_ *This research aims to highlight the key challenges facing housing support services for homeless people with mental illness in Greece. After an interpretative overview of the form of housing support services, the field research aims to uncover the main challenges that they face. The research findings, such as the indirect and immediate impacts of the crisis on the worsening availability of housing services for the homeless, as well as the focus on emergency practices, show that the current form of the social protection system excludes these people from access to housing support. Some basic lines of reform are proposed in the conclusion.*

Keywords_ *Social policy, homeless with mental illness, Greece, crisis.*

Introduction

This research explores the key challenges facing housing support services for homeless people with mental illness in Greece during the economic crisis. This will be attempted through exploring the perceptions of Greek mental health professionals. The discussion will be developed at three levels of analysis. First, through a short effort to interpret the general characteristics of housing services for this vulnerable group in Greece. Secondly, by highlighting the impact of the economic crisis on this social problem. Third, through the challenges emerging in the area of housing support services for mentally ill individuals during the economic crisis.

ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online

In Greece, a residual housing support framework came to prevail over time, the features of which more closely resembled the staircase approach (For a brief critical analysis of the staircase and housing first approaches see Busch-Geertsema, 2013, p.15). As a consequence, those who suffered from mental illness and did not enjoy family protection were at risk of becoming rough sleepers (Kourachanis, 2017a). The Greek state has, over time, not developed a coherent network of social housing policies (Maloutas and Economou, 1988; Arapoglou and Gounis, 2017). The treatment of homelessness in Greece followed the tendencies of other southern European countries (Allen *et al*., 2004). In the absence of a coherent network of social interventions, the institution of the family has assumed the main burden for meeting the housing need (Arapoglou, 2004; Emmanuel, 2006; Maloutas, 2008).

These general characteristics are also observed in social policies for homeless and mentally ill individuals. Social care for people with mental illness remained asylum-centred[1] at least until the end of the 1970s. The accession of Greece to the European Economic Community in 1981 was followed by the initial Europeanization of Social Policy (indicatively Sakellaropoulos, 2001). In this context, a more systematic reflection on psychiatric reform began. EEC Regulation 815/84, as amended by Regulation 4130/88, contributed significantly to the development of a network of preventive and therapeutic psychiatric services in the community or in general hospitals and to the reduction of the number of long-term patients in public psychiatric hospitals (Mastroyannakis *et al*., 2015, p.75).

In national legislation, the implementation of psychiatric reform began with Law 1397/1983, which established the National Health System (indicatively Economou, 2015). It was expanded by Law 2071/1992, which described the mental health units as being part of the range of health services. It also referred to the sectoralization and responsibilities of the Sectoral Mental Health Commissions and, most importantly, regulated the issue of involuntary hospitalization. Psychiatric reform was consolidated with Law 2716/1999, which described a modern community mental health system (prevention, primary, secondary and psychosocial rehabilitation) with an emphasis on, among other things, the protection of the rights of mentally ill patients.

However, a constant feature of social policy in Greece has been the fragmented nature of its interventions (Venieris and Papatheodorou, 2003; Petmesidou and Mossialos, 2006). To ensure continuity in psychiatric reform, the Psychargos programme was created. Psychargos aimed at transforming psychiatric hospitals

---

[1] Only a few exemptions of innovative psychiatric approaches can be observed from that time. The period 1964-1967 at the Aiginiteio Hospital under the psychiatrists D. Koureta and P. Sakellaropoulos can be considered particularly important as a broad therapeutic program was organized (group psychotherapy, releases from the hospital, work with the family, etc.) that was also educational for the staff (Sakellaropoulos, 2003).

into a network of mental health services in the community, as well as the development of primary and secondary care structures. Great emphasis was placed on social reintegration and entry into the workplace of people with mental health problems.

After the difficult institutional development of mental health services in Greece, a range of social services has come to be implemented in which public, non-profit and private organizations are active. Public bodies include Psychiatric Hospitals, General Hospital Psychiatric Wards and their associated outpatient units. Non-profit organizations include primary structures (day centres, mobile units), and tertiary care structures, residential houses, apartments as well as occupational rehabilitation structures. The private sector includes private psychiatric clinics and private practitioners (Mastroyannakis *et al*., 2015, p.27).

Psychargos, to date, has been developed over three different periods (2000-2001, 2001-2010, 2010-2020). Although there have been significant improvements in the psychiatric care system, there are many challenges that still need to be addressed. The development of tertiary care services, residential houses and protected apartments for the de-institutionalization of patients from psychiatric hospitals has been lop-sided. There are significant deficiencies in and an uneven geographical spread of primary (Day Centres, Mental Health Centres, Mobile Units) and secondary structures (for example, the psychiatric wards of general hospitals). All these dimensions make it difficult to close the remaining psychiatric hospitals (Mastroyannakis *et al*., 2015, p.29). At the same time, these deficiencies necessarily lead to addressing urgent issues, rather than developing preventative policies. The high rate of involuntary admissions and the phenomenon of the "revolving door" (Stylianidis *et al*., 2017) are typical. The "revolving door" phenomenon was described from very early on in the literature and refers to a group of psychiatric patients with a high incidence of re-admission. It has been linked to de-institutionalization and the fact that it did not coincide with the development of an adequate network of Community services (Talbott, 1974).

Moreover, the process of the sectorization of the mental health services has not yet been completed due to the lack of a central coordination and delays in the reform process. To this end, the recent Law 4461/2017, which attempted the administrative reform of mental health services, was introduced. However, to date, the problems remain the same: lack of a coordination of mental health structures at the central level; the development of services without prior diagnosis of needs; the lack of services for children, adolescents and special population categories; the lack of the evaluation of services; and the lack of the substantial participation and advocacy of service users and their families are just some (indicatively Loukidou *et al*., 2013).

The ongoing economic crisis has an impact on the mental health of the population and it also has a structural impact on mental health services (Christodoulou, 2017). Thus, as the needs for mental health services increase, they are subject to under-funding and under-staffing (Giannakopoulos and Anagnostopoulos, 2016). During the crisis, mental health problems appear to be significantly worse among the homeless population, especially for those living in urban centres. Indeed, many of them face chronic mental illnesses (Madianos, 2013). This phenomenon has been broadly observed in the international literature (for example, Fazel *et al*., 2008).

The fragmentary and residual housing support for people with mental illnesses in Greece seems to be trapping them into living on the streets. At a time when there are significant signs of a worsening of this social problem, it is of great interest to identify and highlight the major challenges facing housing support services. This will be attempted below, with the presentation of the results of the field research.

Methodology of the Field Research

In order to investigate the key challenges faced by housing support services for homeless people with mental illness during the economic crisis, field research was conducted using qualitative research methods. Specifically, in-depth interviews were conducted with those involved in the housing support services for this social group, in order to identify the key challenges they face. The criterion for selecting these informants was the representative inclusion of all stakeholders.

More specifically, fourteen interviews were held: two with representatives of the Ministry of Health; two with mental health researchers; four with representatives of mental health agencies with an advisory role in the design and implementation of health policies; two with representatives of psychiatric hospitals; and four with representatives of non-governmental mental health organizations. The findings from the field research are presented below.

Research Findings

The field research highlights two complementary axes of analysis related to the challenges facing housing support services for homeless people with mental illness. The first axis is related to the effects of the economic crisis. Since there is no official data on the qualitative and quantitative dimensions for homeless people in Greece, identifying the impacts of the crisis is attempted in two ways: first, through the indirect evidence for factors that are likely to affect this population; and second, by highlighting the cuts in social benefits resulting from austerity policies.

The second axis is related to the features of the social policies that are being developed in response to the impact of the crisis. Each of these axes includes many individual dimensions.

As regards the first axis, the interviews demonstrate that the impact of the crisis further exacerbates the access of homeless people to mental illness in the home. Of course, this conclusion derives mainly from indirect evidence. Aggregate data on the qualitative and quantitative characteristics of homeless people in Greece are still absent. However, due to the crisis, the representatives of the institutions working in the field say there has been a significant deterioration in both homelessness and mental health: a combination that has multiple negative consequences for people living on the street.

Another indication that weakens the social protection framework for homeless people is the crisis of the familistic type of social protection. As mentioned in the first part of the research note, the family was the main informal mechanism for housing protection for people with mental illness. The wider impact of crisis and austerity policies on household income and living standards has entailed a significant reduction in family support for vulnerable members.

As regards the worsening of the problem due to social spending cuts, it has been verified that the absence of targeted policies for homeless people with mental illness continues in times of economic crisis; the social policy framework deteriorates. At the same time, constraints on resources and social benefits, as well as design shortcomings, intensify the squeeze on available housing structures. As a result, access to mental health structures is blocked due to overcrowding, but mostly due to the lack of specialized structures for homeless people with mental illness.

The second axis of the analysis of the findings concerns the characteristics of the social policies that are being developed during the economic crisis for homeless people with mental illness. A first important observation relates to the persistence of the absence of targeted housing policies. Any housing interventions that are being developed during the crisis do not adapt to specific forms of homelessness such as this, which has important implications for the structure of housing support services.

The emphasis is placed on short-term housing solutions with emergency practices. Targeted policies to prevent homelessness, but also to prevent a worsening of mental health, are residual. This is mainly due to the inadequacy of primary mental health structures, specialized structures for specific population categories, but also to the inadequate implementation of their attempted sectorization. A second aspect of this issue is that homeless people with mental illness are excluded from homeless

structures. At the same time, given the inadequate number of mental health structures and the lack of specialized services, a large number of people with mental illness are forced to live on the streets.

The most important factor is the prevalence of short-term treatment solutions and housing. Emergency treatment services are widespread – mainly through the public prosecutors' orders. This situation often leads to the revolving door phenomenon, since mental health structures fail to place these individuals in protected housing yet at the same time they keep them in therapeutic follow-up to prevent the vicious circle of re-admissions. This phenomenon is exacerbated by the inadequacy of transitional housing structures for all those who are discharged from psychiatric hospitalization structures. Finally, the lack of a holistic approach has the effect of recycling this important social problem. Housing rehabilitation programmes developed during the crisis do not specifically target vulnerable groups affected by additional social disadvantages. More broadly, social integration policies do not adequately include actions for homeless people with mental illness. Each parameter that constitutes the two general axes of analysis of the findings is presented below.

The impact of the economic crisis on homeless people with mental illness and housing support services

Indirect Evidence

The impact of the economic crisis and austerity policies on homeless people with mental illness can only be traced indirectly, given that Greece has not yet established a centralized mechanism for collecting data on homelessness. As mentioned in the first part of this research note, there are significant indications that homelessness is worsening during the crisis. At the same time, the relevant studies highlight that mental health phenomena are worsening (Tountas, 2016). All these developments strengthen the suspicion that homelessness has worsened in the last decade.

> Even people who had not mental health problems but become homeless subsequently acquired a psychiatric disorder. We have seen it all these years. The majority of them stay on the streets and their mental disorders grow. As their mental health problems increase, the more difficult their social inclusion becomes. It is a vicious circle. Staying on the street leads to an increase in mental illness, regardless of whether it was there previously. And if it was there before, life on the street makes it worse. It is, as we say in our profession, the "psychopathology of the street".
>
> NGO Representative

As mentioned in the first part, the main burden of housing protection for people with mental illness in Greece came to be borne over time by the family. The formation of this informal solidarity network often led to structural gridlock. When protection by the family is absent or when crisis conditions are unable to fulfil social reproduction operations, vulnerable people are exposed to the risk of poverty and social exclusion (Kourachanis, 2017a). Those suffering from mental illness who did not enjoy the housing protection of the family ended up living in psychiatric units for a long time, as they did not have any other housing and treatment options to provide them with accommodation and, at the same time, to support them in maintaining it.

Over the last few decades, the familistic type of social protection has gone through a profound crisis, a crisis that is being exacerbated because of the economic crisis. Austerity measures and their wider implications mean that the family is unable to respond to the need to provide social protection to its members (Papadopoulos and Roumpakis, 2013, pp.219-220). This development seems also to have had an impact on the housing protection of homeless people with mental illness.

> Over time, the housing needs of people with mental illness came to be covered by their families. We have many cases where parents or close relatives were looking after the mentally ill. During the crisis, the family's ability to care for these people has declined. Taxes and a reduction in household income mean families cannot protect their own members. During the years of the crisis, we have seen many more families seeking to leave their patients in our institution.
>
> Psychiatrist in a Psychiatric Hospital

Impact of Social Spending Cuts

Cutting social spending is a second dimension that strengthens the indications of an increase in the number of homeless people with mental illness during the economic crisis. The restructuring of the social protection system has had a significant impact on welfare benefits (Venieris, 2013). It is also noteworthy that welfare benefits are offered as repressive interventions to alleviate the consequences of poverty and not as a housing benefit.

The first part of this research note highlighted that before the crisis, there were no targeted social policies for homeless people with mental illness. This phenomenon has been perpetuated during the crisis. In recent years, due to the widespread deterioration of homelessness, some targeted housing interventions have been developed. The most typical example is the Housing and Reintegration programme. Although this programme adopts the extended ETHOS typology for the definition of beneficiaries, this was not implemented in practice. At the implementation stage of the programme, the institutions preferred to select homeless people who had only financial problems and not any other social disadvantages (Kourachanis,

2017b). The evaluation of the Housing and Reintegration programme revealed that only 4.6% of all beneficiaries were living in institutions prior to the programme (Dimoulas *et al*., 2017, p.101; Kourachanis, 2019).

> Both prior to the crisis and today, there are no targeted social interventions for homeless people with mental illness. There are significant gaps in the institutional framework that essentially disregard these groups with accumulated social disadvantages. There are issues that need to be revised and improved.
>
> Representative of the Ministry of Health

The absence of targeted social interventions has had a significant impact on the housing protection of homeless people with mental illness. Gaps in the institutional framework result in a permanent shift of responsibilities between housing structures. Their referral from one housing structure to another is a common phenomenon, according to the testimonies of the workers in the field.

> The homeless end up like a ball bouncing from one structure to another. There are dozens of examples of how a hospital pays a taxi driver and tells him to transfer the homeless to our organization. And we get a call from the hospital and they tell us, 'we've just sent you a homeless person with psychiatric problems'. They never ask us if we have beds available, nor do they care what that person will eventually do. In essence, they just want to make the responsibility go away.
>
> Mental Health Organization staff member

This dimension highlights the phenomenon of the overcrowding of mental health structures. An even greater problem is the lack of specialized services for both housing and outreach approach for those on the streets. The interviews show that during the economic crisis, the demands for accommodation in mental health institutions are increasing, resulting in housing overcrowding and exclusion. The lack of available beds and the priority given to patients in the asylum wards of psychiatric hospitals until recently (December 2018) has resulted in homeless people with mental illness being excluded from access to these housing structures.

At the same time, the corresponding institutional framework for homeless service structures excludes those homeless from housing structures who "exhibit behavioural disorders due to a mental disorder that, due to the assessment of a collaborating psychiatric service, makes it impossible for them to join the structure" (GG 1336/B/12-5-2016). This impasse is a matter of great concern to workers in the field of mental health and homelessness.

Thus, a situation for the management of wretchedness has been created. The inability to respond adequately is made more difficult by the understaffing of mental health units (Giannakopoulos and Anagnostopoulos, 2016). This inability to strengthen psychiatric staff due to cuts in the social protection system leads to a failure to respond to growing social needs and adverse conditions in the provision of services (Council of Europe, 2016).

> The pressure that mental health structures suffer as a result of shrinking medical and nursing staff is great. In fact, the human resources in these structures are diminishing at a time when hospitalization requests are rising. These structures are at over 100% of their capacity. They can even be 120% and 150% of their capacity! And I'm not exaggerating. We are talking about conditions of overcrowding.
>
> Psychologist, Mental Health NGO

The above aspects lead to valid claims that the effects of the crisis and austerity policies have an important impact on social policies for homeless people with mental illness. In the discussion of the second pillar of the findings we will examine the characteristics of the social policy interventions that are being shaped at such an adverse conjuncture.

The characteristics of social policies for homeless people with mental illnesses during the economic crisis

The first part of this research highlighted that the "crisis" in social policies for homeless people with mental illnesses pre-exists the economic crisis. Generally, the housing support framework for this vulnerable group has over time become residual and inadequate. In a sense, the findings show that housing support services for homeless people with mental illness are an extension of the wider physiognomy of social housing policies in times of economic crisis.

It can be noted, therefore, that the weak framework of preventive policies is further weakened. The same applies to housing and social integration policies, which are extremely inadequate. The most basic forms of housing and psychiatric support are mainly implemented through emergency practices. These typically involve an asylum-centric type of housing for acute psychiatric incidents. An important role in shaping such a physiognomy of policies is the exclusion of homeless people from social shelters. Each of the above findings will be analysed independently.

From the interviews, it can be seen that prevention services are not sufficient to effectively protect and manage mental illness before individuals show signs of acute deterioration. The main issues to be addressed in terms of prevention are the

absence of targeted actions, such as using the experiences from mobile mental health units to reach homeless people with mental illness, especially in an urban environment. Such actions could also include the completion of sectorization (Mastroyannakis *et al*., 2015).

> An important issue for prevention is that mobile mental health units have not developed further. Let me give you an example. We are working with mobile units in a small provincial city. There we have people who have mild symptoms of mental illness. We work with the rural doctor, communicate with the community, make visits twice a month and see them, they regularly receive their treatment through our contribution. All these actions keep these people in a socially acceptable situation. With a little support for all of the above, they can live in a dignified manner. The lack of such support models leads the mentally ill onto the streets. In particular, the lack of such approaches in the urban environment, where we have even more homeless.
>
> Psychologist, Mental Health NGO

Alongside this is the issue of the exclusion of homeless people with mental illnesses from housing structures that are intended for the general homeless population. In their overwhelming majority, housing structures have a criterion of only accepting guests that do not have any active psychiatric illnesses. This is a particularly important form of exclusion for homeless people with mental illness. Given the absence of targeted housing actions for them, by effectively being excluded from housing structures, they are driven to sleeping rough.

> Those who are diagnosed as psychiatric cases are not admitted to homeless shelters. With such exclusionary criteria, we are often at the limit of legality and illegality. This is because very often – these are always harmless psychiatric incidents – we do not give them a psychiatric diagnosis so that they can be accepted into a homeless shelter.
>
> Psychiatrist in a Psychiatric Hospital

The most important research finding regarding social policies is related to the adoption of emergency housing practices. The main practice of admitting homeless people with mental illness to psychiatric hospitals is done on a public prosecutor's order. This in practical terms means that homeless people with mental illness living on the street end up being hospitalized in psychiatric units only when they reach the point of having an acute deterioration in their mental health. This is a situation where the structure of social policy itself pushes homeless people with mental illness into conditions of even more extreme social and mental deprivation.

> Housing homeless people with mental illnesses who are living on the street is done with a public prosecutor's order. That is, when local actors are notified that in their neighbourhood there is currently a person who is on the brink of impoverishment and death, then a public prosecutor's order is given for them to be admitted to a hospital for treatment. And this is the main way of housing homeless people with mental illness.
>
> Mental Health NGO Representative

Emergency practices, usually through public prosecutors' orders, are one aspect of residual social housing policies. Another side is the inadequacy of transitional services. The lack of a coherent and sufficient range of transitional hosting policies results in two different situations. On the one hand, we have the institutionalization of this group of mentally ill patients through their long-term stay in psychiatric units. On the other hand, they return to the street, with the most likely outcome being that they are re-admitted to a psychiatric unit when a subsequent acute incident occurs. This brings us back to the debate about the phenomenon of the 'revolving door' (Stylianidis *et al*., 2017).

> Once they have been discharged, these people no longer exist. They have nowhere to stay. Where do they go? There are no transitional services for them to rebuild their lives. Most of them will be rough sleepers. From the street and in a situation of social exclusion, they will again find themselves engaging in delinquent behaviour or again suffering acute psychiatric symptoms. So, it is most likely that at some point they will return to the structures which they left. Whether this is the prison or the psychiatric hospital.
>
> Mental Health NGO Representative

This unfavourable landscape of social support for homeless people with mental illness culminates in the absence of housing and social integration policies. The few initiatives for promoting social inclusion are carried out by non-state actors, the most prominent example being the social cooperatives (KOISPE). These partnerships are aimed at the employment and social integration of people with mental illness through empowering them and their participation in the labour market. However, these projects are of limited scope and are not directly related to housing. It is also virtually impossible for someone without a home and elementary care to be able to meet the needs required to hold down a job.

Conclusion

The framework of housing support services for homeless people with mental illness in Greece has over time become residual and inadequate. Homeless people with mental illness experience a double blockade on their access to housing because of the limited range of services. On the one hand, they are excluded from access to social shelters due to the increased prerequisites for their housing. On the other hand, they experience exclusion from mental health services due to the limited development of these specialized structures. The economic crisis has exacerbated this exclusion in a variety of ways, resulting in increased challenges that need to be addressed.

There are strong indications that mental health problems among the homeless population are increasing during the economic crisis. At the same time, both formal (such as state social policy) and informal institutions (such as the family) of social solidarity are being weakened due to austerity measures. These developments expose the mentally ill to a greater risk of finding themselves on the street. These suspicions are reinforced by the finding that the key housing support programmes during the crisis, such as the Housing and Reintegration Program, included very few people living in mental health structures as beneficiaries.

Due to limitations in housing support services for mentally ill people and due to the country's obligation to close down psychiatric hospitals, priority was given to patients from psychiatric hospitals. The new Circular (Γ3α, β/Γ.Π.οικ.96899/2018, Ministry of Health) changed this priority. In fact, now priority is given to homeless people with mental illness. However, the problems that led homeless people with mental illness to the exclusion from access to these housing structures still remain. The lack of enough available beds in transitional housing units is still a problem. The lack of specialized approaches for this population remains, despite the positive direction of the new Circular. Especially for homeless people with complex mental health problems, i.e. dual diagnosis (severe mental illness and addiction) or severe personality disorders, we need to put in force special approaches, otherwise they will continue to be excluded from supported housing schemes for people with mental illness.

As with the general homeless services, in the case of homeless people with mental illness, emergency practices dominate. The weak framework of preventative services is further weakened. The same applies to housing and social integration policies, which are extremely inadequate. The main practice for admitting homeless people with psychiatric illness to hospital is through an order from a public prosecutor. This in practice means that homeless people with mental illness living on the street end up being hospitalized in psychiatric units only when they reach the point of having an acute deterioration in their mental health. It

therefore follows that the form of mental health and housing support services itself leads to a situation of extreme housing and social marginalization for homeless people with mental illnesses.

The political will for a series of major reforms to housing support services for homeless people with mental illness must be developed in order to radically improve the existing unfavourable framework. The biggest challenge is the development of an integrated housing care and coordinated mental health care services. The basic philosophy of this project could be the transition from the current range of emergency services and short-term solutions to the housing first approach, which is centred on autonomous living in combination with social and mental health services.

From this perspective, the development of a scheme for assertive community treatment and housing care services by the sectorized mental health units could act as a catalyst. The aim of these services will be prevention and timely intervention to avoid a mental crisis or relapse of mental illness and to ensure the continuity of psychiatric care, rehabilitation and recovery.

We propose a scheme that could adapt the housing first model to Greek reality, Greek best practices and lessons learned from Psychiatric Reform. For this purpose, it is important to make further use of the experience of mobile mental health units. The aim of this action will be, along with outreach activities, to create a particular approach to homeless people with mental illnesses sleeping rough, for whom to date few adequate tools have been developed in order to draw them into housing and social support services. The creation of autonomous housing schemes coupled with psychosocial support services is the biggest challenge for the housing and social integration of this cohort.

Finally, as regards social integration policies, it is important to examine the experience of the Social Cooperatives of Limited Liability (KOISPE). These cooperatives have thus far been the main vehicle for integrating people with mental illness into the Greek labour market. The further strengthening of these cooperatives, with the necessary adjustments required for this vulnerable group, can help in the development of an intervention plan with an integrated approach to dealing with homelessness among the mentally ill. The combination of different and individualized housing and social services should offer the solutions sought for a serious, long-term problem in Greek society.

References

Allen, J., Barlow, J., Leal, J., Maloutas, T. and Padovani, L. (2004) *Housing and Welfare in Southern Europe* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing).

Arapoglou, V. and Gounis, K. (2017) *Contested Landscapes of Poverty and Homelessness in Southern Europe. Reflections from Athens* (London: Palgrave Macmillan).

Arapoglou, V. (2004) The Governance of Homelessness in Greece: Discourse and Power in the Study of Philanthropic Networks, *Critical Social Policy* 24(1) pp.102-126.

Busch-Geertsema, V. (2013) *Housing First Europe. Final Report* (Brussels: European Commission).

Christodoulou, N. (2017) Economic Crisis and Mental Health – Findings from Greece, *Die Psychiatrie* 2 pp.90-94.

Council of Europe (2016) Nils Muiznieks, Commissioner for Human Rights, Ref: CommHR/NM/sf 037-2016, Strasbourg, 17 August 2016 Letter to Mr Xanthos, Minister of Health and Ms Fotiou, Alternate Minister of Social Solidarity of Greece.

Dimoulas, C., Kourachanis, N. and Kazani, A. (2017) *Evaluation of the Housing and Reintegration Programme* (Athens: ΕΙΕΑD) (in Greek).

Economou, C. (2015) *Barriers and Facilitating Factors in Access to Health Services in Greece* (Copenhagen: WHO).

Emmanuel, D. (2006) Social Housing Policy in Greece: The Dimensions of an Absence, *Greek Review of Social Research* 120 pp.3-35 (in Greek).

Fazel, S., Khosla, V., Doll, H. and Geddes, J. (2008) The Prevalence of Mental Disorders among the Homeless in Western Countries: Systematic Review and Meta-Regression Analysis, *PLoS Med* 5(12) pp.225.

Giannakopoulos, G. and Anagnostopoulos, D. (2016) Psychiatric Reform in Greece: An Overview, *BJPsych Bulletin* 40(6) 326-328.

Kourachanis, N. (2017a) *Homelessness Policies. The Greek Residual Approach* (Athens: Papazisi) (in Greek).

Kourachanis, N. (2017b) Homelessness Policies in Crisis Greece: The Case of Housing and Reintegration Program, *European Journal of Homelessness* 11(1) pp.59-80.

Kourachanis, N. (Ed.) (2019) *Housing and Society. Problems, Policies and Movements,* Athens: Dionicos (in Greek).

Loukidou, E., Mastroyannakis, A., Power, T., Thornicroft, G., Craig, T. and Bouras, N. (2013) Evaluation of Greek Psychiatric Reforms: Methodological Issues, *International Journal of Mental Health Systems* 7(11) pp.1-8.

Madianos, M.G. (2013) Economic Crisis, Mental Health and Psychiatric Care: What Happened to the "Psychiatric Reform" in Greece?, *Psychiatriki* 24(1) pp.1-3.

Maloutas, T. (2008) Housing Provision Models and Family Strategies in Athens, in: M.R.P. d' Assuncao Carlos (Ed.) *The Challenge of Social Policy Reform in the XXI Century: Towards Integrated Systems of Social Protection* (Athens: Sideris).

Maloutas, T. and Economou, D. (Eds.) (1988) *Development Problems of the Welfare State in Greece* (Exantas, Athens) (in Greek).

Mastroyannakis, A., Nikolakopoulos, I., Markatou, A., Braoudaki, E., Braoudakis, G., Power, T., Graig, T., Thornicroft, G. and Bouras, N. (2015) *Final Evaluation Report of the Implementation of the Psychiatric Reforms for the Period 2011-2015* (Ministry of Health: Athens).

Papadopoulos, T. and Roumpakis, A. (2013) Familistic Welfare Capitalism in Crisis: Social Reproduction and Anti-social Policy in Greece*, Journal of International and Comparative Social Policy* 29(3) pp.204-224.

Petmesidou, M. and Mossialos, E. (Eds) (2006) *Social Policy Developments in Greece* (London: Routledge).

Sakellaropoulos, P. (2003) Preface, in: D. Damigos (2003) *Desinstitulization and its Relation with Primary Care* (Athens: Papazisi) (in Greek).

Sakellaropoulos, T. (2001) *Supranational Social Policies in the Era of Globalizations* (Athens: Kritiki) (in Greek).

Stylianidis, S., Peppou, E., Drakonakis, N., Douzenis, A., Panagou, A., Tsikou, K., Pantazi, A., Rizavas, Y., Saraceno, B. (2017) Mental Health Care in Athens: Are Compulsory Admissions in Greece a One-way Road?, *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry* 52 pp.28-34.

Talbott, J.A. (1974) Stopping the Revolving Door: A Study of Readmissions to a State Hospital, *Psychiatric Quarterly* 48(2) pp.159-168.

Tountas, I. (2016) *The Health of the Greeks in Crisis* (Athens: Dianeosis/Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine) (in Greek).

Venieris, D. (2013) *Crisis Social Policy and Social Justice: The Case for Greece.* GreeSE Paper No 69 (London: Hellenic Observatory, LSE).

Venieris, D. and Papatheodorou, C. (Eds.) (2003) *Social Policy in Greece: Challenges and Prospects* (Athens: Ellinika Grammata) (in Greek).

Conducting a Walking Interview to Explore Pathways Out of Persistent and Recurrent Homelessness

Sally Mann

University of Greenwich, London, UK

Abstract_ *This paper suggests walking interview methodology offers a valuable tool to explore the social phenomenology of homelessness, especially biographies of periods of liminal identity and transition. The method takes seriously the embodied, relational and visual components of attuning to personal narratives, made possible in a shared and leisurely journey to places of biographical significance. It also considers the relevance of the researcher's subjective position in terms of auto/biographical reflection and the issues of power pertinent to researching marginalised communities.*

Keywords_ *Walking interview, participatory methods, homelessness, place, identity*

Introduction

My interest in studying the phenomenology of homelessness was born from a decision, taken five years ago, to leave a fulltime academic role in order to spend half my week volunteering with a grassroots community organisation responding to homelessness in my neighbourhood.

In April 2014, several small charities in the London Borough of Newham joined together to tackle rising levels of street homelessness and try to meet the needs of those living with multiple deprivations. They formed *The Purpose and Belonging Project.* The lead charity was *Bonny Downs Community Association* (BDCA). This new alliance launched a day centre for local people experiencing homeless called

ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online

NewDay. In an unusual step, they based their project in a sports pavilion, with access to a playing field and community garden. They began with only two part-time, grant-funded posts, but were quickly awarded a commission from the Department for Work and Pensions 'Flexible Support Fund'. The key distinctive of *NewDay* is its ethos of respectful, long-term relationships and holistic practices that re-establish connection to place and neighbourhood. These practices are homespun: gardening, cooking, communal eating, participating in sports, offered alongside advocacy and skills-building. They adopt an asset-based methodology and, most importantly, offer a community to belong to. I have volunteered in this project for five years. I clearly have an emotional investment in any research that might come out of this period. I am also acutely aware of the power differentials between myself as a volunteer and an academic, and those accessing the project's services. The themes of power and emotion were prevalent in my decision to conduct formal research at *NewDay*. Letherby suggests this is unavoidable,

> All research is an auto/biographical practice, an intellectual activity that involves a consideration of power, emotion and P/politics. (Letherby, 2014, pp.1-2)

That said, might my involvement in the project produce 'accountable knowledge'? (Cotterill and Letherby, 1998; Letherby, 2003; Katz Rothman, 2007). When researching marginalised communities, Kamala Visweswaren argues that the key question is, 'whether we can be accountable to people's own struggles for self-representation and self-determination' (Visweswaren, 1988, p.39). My growing confidence to bring activism and academia together rested largely on the possibility that this research might elicit co-produced, accountable knowledge, of a type which might benefit *NewDay* and inform the broader conversation about successful transition. That said, I needed to determine which methodological practices best serve this end.

Reflexive Practice and Settling on a Methodology

A good deal of reflexive practice took place in order to settle on a walking method. The concept of 'reflexivity' has been central to recent academic discussions of knowledge production (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Subramani speaks of 'reflexive moments' in her doctoral study, when the researcher turns their gaze upon the practice of research itself:

> Who practises 'it'; what the research is 'on'; and what the researcher's agenda 'is'? Each researcher embarks on their reflexive journey by giving significance to what they think is crucial to their research. (Subramani, 2019, p.1)

I experienced such moments. I began with the supposition that I would conduct my research using mainly participatory methods. These are part of a broader concern to research everyday life with 'close' and 'sympathetic consideration' (Stanley and Wise, 1993, p.2). Participatory methods are also fundamentally an expression of epistemology, addressing the question of how knowledge relates to the process and products of particular methodological approaches (Stanley and Wise, 2003; Letherby *et al.*, 2014).

I began my research by asking the community at *NewDay* if they would like to help me better understand the experience of homelessness. Having received a significant expression of interest, I began with focus groups, asking for insights the participants felt were important. I gathered primary data from six formal groups – three a mixture of staff and volunteers and three with project members, all conducted over the period of one year.

There were positives and negatives. The unstructured nature of the conversations went some way to the co-production of knowledge; many of the homeless participants told me what I should be asking. I was finding ways to listen attentively and settled on a narratological or 'storied' approach (Thomas and Dittmar, 1995, p.498). I hoped that levels of trust I had built might allow the voices of some of the victims of a national crisis to be heard, and highlight the valuable wisdom accrued by a small community project. The stories gathered were very particular – they came from one community's response and the narratives of a few dozen people. I was to become more yet committed to particularity when I decided to shift my data collection method to an extended walking interview.

Subramani (2019, p.2) claims, reflexivity demystifies the moral and epistemological stances of both the study and researcher. I had a 'reflective moment' where the negative aspects to my chosen method to date became apparent. Having never experienced street homelessness, I am clearly an 'outsider'; but as Arthur (2010) suggests, the 'insider / outsider' dichotomy is overly simplistic and a researcher's identity can shift positions, a process which takes place within a matrix of power. I began to understand that as a long-term volunteer I had become a 'partial inbetweener', a trusted outsider. However, my new subjective position, as a formal researcher, reshaped interactions with participants. The power differential was more apparent: *How* had I listened? What had gone unsaid?

I further intuited that deeper insights could be gained from sustained attention given to the theme of *place* prevalent in the narratives. Had the *place* we talked shaped the answers given? I live in the same small neighbourhood as the *NewDay* project; I travel through the same physical space as those who are homeless. We shared place; albeit with very different interactions and potentially divergent understandings of these sites. This was to be an important factor in deciding to adopt an

extended walking interview. I was looking for a method which would further the co-production of knowledge, limit my privileged position and would pay greater attention to the theme of 'place'. I needed to be taken to the spaces and places which had been part of the narratives – as a guest rather than a guide.

Why Walk?

Walking to undertake social research has a long history within participatory methods, especially when considering issues of migration and marginalisation, and has been particularly valuable in interrogating the notion of borders (O'Neill, 2019). Moreover, O'Neill (2019) points out,

> Borders can also be internal[ised] and walking is a powerful route to understand the lived experiences of others as well as eliciting rich phenomenological material. (https://www.walkingborders.com/)

This is surely partly due to how memories are triggered corporeally (O'Neill and Hubbard, 2010). Intentionally setting out to enable this to happen sets the walking method apart from a routine experience of walking. It allows focussed attention to the sensual and relational aspects of being together in a place as you talk: senses trigger memories; the relational connection allows for deeper insight. It is a valuable method to unlock biography. To this extent, the 'Walking Interview as a Biographical Method (WIBM)' has become recognised as a formal methodology, with growing appreciation among many researchers focussing on community issues (O'Neill, 2019). It is part of a broader movement to investigate urban contexts, through 'mobilities' (Ferguson, 2016; Roy, 2016; Smith and Hall, 2016).

In terms of exploring liminal identity, the walking interview has distinct advantages. It encourages reflection on how a person felt at a previous time in a certain place, and how they feel about themselves today and how a place has been part of their navigation through identities. This was evident in Dean's walking interview which took place over a period of almost seven hours on one day – stopping at sites which were important in Dean's story: places where he had slept rough; the community centre where he had first reached out for support; the church building where he slept as part of a volunteer-run winter night shelter and where he became a 'tea angel'; the sports pavilion where he joined in many of the offers from the *NewDay* project, primarily again as a volunteer himself. We later visited his new flat, where he had finally settled into a new way of living and a new identity away from the streets.

A Walking Interview with Dean

According to Somerville, 'although pathways out of homelessness appear to be more clearly patterned than pathways into homelessness, they are less well understood' (2013, p.409). I accompanied Dean, a 56-year-old man with over five years' connection to *NewDay* on a journey to significant places in his story. In each location Dean told me what each place meant to him; discussions of place correlated with shifts in identity which made transition possible (correlating to the findings of May, 2000).

Dean was made homeless through a 'perfect storm' of his wife's worsening mental illness, the loss of one of their children to the care system, spiralling substance addiction, his own mental illness and unmanageable debt. During his initial breakdown he spent three months in a psychiatric unit in an unfamiliar part of London. On release he was sent to the "wrong housing office". He remembers having "just one set of clothes and my PJs in a bag". Turned away from the building he rang friends and acquaintances and one of them took him in. This kindness meant that Dean had been lost to the rehousing process and began many years 'sofa surfing' between friends' homes, time "AWOL" on the streets and eventually five years of sustained rough sleeping. He suffered with undiagnosed PTSD. He took loans from loan sharks to repay friends. They took his bank card; any benefits he received went directly to them, and still the debt was spiralling – reaching £12 000. As he told me his story, Dean took me to where he slept rough for five years. The fondness in his remembrance of that place was striking:

> It was nice. It was very nice. It felt homely because there's an overhang here, see, so you stay dry. I didn't need a tent like some poor blokes in the park. I had my sleeping bag. I never begged but people would get to know me and bring me coffee and smokes. [five years of rough sleeping] It flew by. It was wonderful. I would watch the college kids turn out in the evening and think 'Here I am.' Calm. It was like I disconnected but I was coming to terms with where I was at. I think it's what I needed. I started to get a peace of mind… People probably thought I needed help. But I was idle. I couldn't look at making choices. I didn't want anything to do with it all.

The emotions recalled in that site helped me to understand what this place had meant in a way that I had not previously appreciated; a way I could not have understood without listening to Dean in that specific context.

Dean then took me to the places where he began to reconnect to mainstream society. Each of these sites networked 'offers' through the *NewDay* programme. His story was of a long, tentative journey to begin working through his problems. It was clear that 'homelessness' for Dean was far more than 'rooflessness'. It had

become both a retreat from problems he was not able to face and an identity through which he could disconnect and, at times, elicit the kindness of strangers. But it had also trapped him in spiralling poverty, robbed him of his health and had become increasingly isolating.

Dean showed remarkable insight and a disarming level of honesty. He shared a whole life story, not just the experience of homelessness. Somerville (2013) argues that we need a 'multidimensional and storied' approach which considers 'the whole life of the homeless person, rather than just at selected episodes of rooflessness' (2013, p.384). Homelessness is multi-faceted experience: it is physiological (lack of bodily comfort and warmth); emotional (lack of love or joy); territorial (lack of privacy); ontological (lack of rootedness in the world, anomie) and spiritual (lack of hope and purpose) (Somerville, 2013, p.384). People who are homeless will experience each dimension differently.

Dean's recollection of rough sleeping is a good case in point. The experience of being disconnected from social responsibility and occasional random acts of kindness outweighed the negative physiological or territorial aspects of rooflessness. In fact, emotionally and ontologically, Dean recalls these years as positive – as 'giving him space'. Only when problems with debtors compounded his situation did he begin to seek ways to move away from the streets. Eventually a friend brought him into the BDCA community centre – but not to a homeless project, to an elders' group, and not directly to access support or advice.

> I was getting into a cycle with not having money and the debt going up and up. People here offered me meals, but I said no. I was foolish. I didn't want pity. But they let me just hang out. It was mostly old people. They were very understanding.

We then went walked to the church building around the corner. The building hosts the winter night-shelter, community meal and foodbank. It has a bench in the garden where we sat because it was significant to Dean and I asked him to explain what this place meant.

> This is a 'home place' too. I walked in and I was the bottom of the barrel. They gave me a bag of grub…I felt humility. I think these people are stunning. The help they give people. I thought if they are doing this, I can do this. It put me in perspective.

Dean became a volunteer on the second week he went to the project.

> I became the 'tea angel'. That's what they call me here.

Parsons' (2018) consideration of liminal identities is relevant in Dean's recollection. His transition from an identity based on homelessness was aided by becoming a 'tea angel'. He had navigated through a period of liminal identity. The precarious journey was made more possible because he was immediately allowed to perform

acts of 'commensality' (Parsons, 2018). Parsons and Pettinger (2017) describe 'foodways', everyday social practices around food and meals, as playing an important role in transition in their case-study at a homeless centre. Dean's role as a 'tea-angel' was a tool of empowerment and resistance against his identity as a 'homeless person'.

Still street-sleeping, Dean stepped up his volunteer responsibilities collecting donated food. He secured the agreement of a local bakery to donate their unsold items. He asked another homeless man to help him make twice weekly collections.

> Me and J – we became the 'trolley dollies'. We did that rain or snow. It was the right thing to do. People would say, 'why are you doing this, you are homeless yourself?' but I wasn't discontent. And people know me now. They know my trolley. I would make some stop-offs to the other men [rough-sleeping] and I'd put a 'cheesecake' through A's door for her husband [A is the project manager] and then I had the keys to this building [the church] so I can drop my trolleys off for Wednesday.

After several years' affiliation with the foodbank, Dean eventually accepted an invitation to join the night-shelter and spent six weeks sleeping in church buildings across the borough, moving between venues and meeting with a support worker to assess his needs. He described the spiritual meaning he took from sleeping under the wooden cross in the church building we were visiting. He couched his recollections in terms of 'knowing things would be OK' and 'having time to try and pull it all together'. Dean describes himself as always having had a personal faith. The night-shelter became a significant time of transition.

> I just stayed here and slept under this cross and I'd feel peace. I'd stay awake and think 'it's all going to be OK' then I did my usual things in the day. I did my work with the tea and the trolleys… J [his advocate] he's a diamond. He is a good man. He did not rush me. He knew I had a lot going on in my head. That's what we do here. We give people time. We welcome everyone. It's about being here for people.

Dean's use of 'we' to describe the service provision and ethos of the project is noticeable. There was no sense that he was a 'service-user' in his account. He couched his relationships in terms of community affiliation. After five years of street homelessness Dean was surprised to hear that he had secured accommodation locally.

> I didn't know I was getting it. I was stunned. Seven years of not having my own place. Everyone else was so pleased but I didn't know what to think…. but it's only a bus ride away though… they sorted me out carpets and bought me a new fridge. The flat was just a shell… I felt so isolated. I made the mistake to stay in and sit in the quiet. Big mistake. My brain started to tick over too fast and invent things. It sounds stupid to you, and I don't tell people this, but a few times I went

> back to sleep back at the library. It was the shock of having my own place. I could not cope. I needed to get out and away. I go AWOL sometimes. It's happened a couple of times… now I'm over it

Through careful narratological methodologies, McNaughton (2008) postulates two pathways within homelessness: downward 'spirals of divestment passages' and upward 'integrative passages' (2008, p.91). 'Divestment passages' include practices undertaken to numb trauma, such as drug use, which end up increasing the risk of further trauma. These lead to a downward trajectory; usually to crisis points of rehab, hospital admittance or death. The second pathway is an 'integrative passage'- a long, upward process, often marked by 'flip-flopping' between integrative and divestment passages. McNaughton (2008) explores the potential for services designed to assist homeless people to be complicit in the cycle between upward and downward spirals. For example, those lacking the resilience to cope in hostel accommodation can respond with 'edgework' such as drug taking within the hostel, be expelled and spiral back down into homelessness. Integrative passages are fraught with danger. Dean speaks of his 'flip-flopping behaviour' with a level of self-awareness. He went on to describe how, in time, he came to settle into more sustained 'integrative process.' I prompted Dean about what had helped him settle:

> I have these jobs I do here. I get up and out every morning. Though now I listen to the morning chorus first. I can sit quiet now. Peace and quiet. But I've been ill, and in and out of hospital. I'm getting back my rounds [collecting food] and I still make tea… I'd been away, everyone had been asking after me. When I came back it was 'Good! Now put the kettle on!'… We do our [food] collections and chill out here. And everyone walking by, look, like that person, they all look out for me, they all know me here.

Ravenhill (2008) describes four identifiable 'catalysts', divided into 'push and pull factors', in the transition from homelessness. Dean's story fits with Ravenhill's (2008) theory. The first 'push' is 'reaching rock bottom' (2008, p.185). Dean described being at the 'bottom of the barrel'. Spiralling debts pushed him to accept help, but he could only do this in his identity as a volunteer. Then, 'pull factors' such as new affiliations need to exert enough traction to enter an upward 'integrative' passage. Their strength plays a large part in setting the direction of travel. In Ravenhill's study the first pull factor is to appreciate that someone outside of the homeless culture cares about them and expresses this in an unconditional way (Ravenhill, 2008, p.186). This fits entirely with Dean's experience of acceptance and the unconditional and reciprocal relationships he had while still on the periphery of *NewDay*. Holistic care, offered in a careful and respectful way, led to a sustainable speed of gradual but successful transition. This correlates with the findings of

Cornes and Manthorpe (2011) who argue that community based holistic care is a better approach than models separating out the multiple deprivations and complex needs into separate spheres of intervention.

The second pull factor is the ready availability of networks of support within the 'homeless industry' outside the homeless culture. Ravenhill (2008) suggests that this catalyst is rarely how the pathway from homelessness starts but is a precondition for its success. Dean's story suggests that timing and ongoing offers to connect with are vital. Other participants also described *NewDay* as a 'pull factors' offering a sense of belonging:

> I come here because I feel like this is home. I can have a shower, put telly on, read a paper… all the things you might do at home and don't think twice

Meals, sports, positive engagements, people missing you when you are not there, were identified reasons why guests at *NewWay* access services. They describe substantial pull factors into an alternative community from the street. These reciprocal encounters all happened in specific places; visiting them brought these remembrances to the fore. Dean's description of being part of *NewDay* was peppered with memories of kindness, which he described as 'above and beyond' from those working with him: from gifts and practical help to move to trusting him with keys to venues. Cloke *et al.* (2010) argue that charitable settings are often better able to provide a level of unconditionality than statutory. They foster closer, personal relationships between the volunteers and 'service-users'. The looser fit of expectations also better allows for the inevitable 'flip-flopping' during a long period of resettlement. This is not to say that staff are not affected by the spirals of divestment in those they work with. *NewDay* staff reflected during a focus group,

> It happens a lot. You are never really ready for it. We have people who make a lot of great steps forward and then suddenly it all goes haywire and you feel, like, kind of let down, frustrated… We do see progress collapse. It always hurts.

Part of the explanation for destructive 'edgework' can be found in an exploration of the cultures of homelessness. At times, the close emotional ties among those ostracised from mainstream society mitigate against an individual breaking free of a 'culture of homelessness' (McNaughton, 2008, p.149). Ravenhill's (2008) ethnographic work defines homelessness as a set of relationships: the social networks the homeless person participates in, and the 'cultures' these foster. These 'include emotional support and positive experiences of shared care, as well as the negative 'edgework' risks of threatening and risky behaviours. These occur within the same relationships. The marginalisation of homeless people creates tight subcultures which are difficult to leave. They exert 'pull' factors:

> Once an individual has acclimatized to rooflessness and survived the first few days and weeks, it becomes increasingly difficult to help them move back into mainstream society. This is, in part, because of the intensity and strength of the networks and friendships formed early on. Separation from such intense friendships can be painful and may become increasingly difficult the longer a person remains within the homeless culture. (Ravenhill, 2008, p.161)

There is one final fundamental point to raise from Dean's story. Exploring the positive benefits of the therapeutic community Dean eventually connected with should not detract from the initial failure of institutions to meet statutory obligations – described by Dean as 'being sent to the wrong housing office'. No matter where Dean presented himself, he had a legal right to have his application taken, the offer of temporary accommodation and a referral to the appropriate housing office. The failure to meet these legal obligations led to eight years of homelessness, sofa-surfing and rough-sleeping. Unfortunately, Dean's story can be read not only as an example of negligence but as part of a political culture exhibiting increasingly punitive attitudes towards the poorest and most vulnerable members of society. The trend within neoliberalism towards punitive attitudes towards people experiencing poverty and homelessness is described by Wacquant (2012) and Herrmann (2011). It begins with the 'economisation of the social': cuts in benefits; the reduction in affordable housing and increase of insecure tenures and is exacerbated in the withdrawal of funding to support services which leave the public sector ill-equipped to comply with statutory obligations.

Having outlined the strengths of a Walking Interview as Biographic Method (WIBM) I now identify some of its weaknesses and potential dangers, especially in exploring experiences of homelessness. Firstly, WIBM within this cohort may reasonably be expected to include recollections of personal tragedy. In this, it might fall into 'sin talk' discourses. Gowan (2010) delignates three discursive categories within discussions of homelessness: 'sin', 'system' and 'sick talk'. Gowen argues that 'sin talk' dominated until the 1960s. This approach rooted homelessness in personal recklessness or moral failure. There is an ongoing legacy of this discourse in representations of homeless people today (Wagner, 2015; Chauhan and Foster, 2013). There is a danger that WIBM, given its particularity and turn to the individual, risks falling into 'sin talk' and its inherent mistaken notions of causation. Dean was unaware of the extent to which bureaucratic failure was part of his story and he did not recognise the systemic shifts in housing provision and welfare encompassing his experiences. Adopting WIBM alone, without attention to structural context, risk a return to 'sin talk'. For good reason, 'sin talk' was replaced by 'system talk', focussing on structural causation, which became more pronounced between the 1960s and 1980s. Today, systemic explanations of homelessness are giving way to a newly developed 'sick talk' attempting to bring structural and individual aspects

together, exploring what makes an individual less able to cope within changing adverse structures. Somerville (2013) identifies problems with the new orthodoxy of 'sick talk'. Categories of structural and individual causes can blur and break down. The same blurring can occur within WIBM. The danger is that structural causes are disguised beneath the narrated accounts of those who are victims to a crisis but can only understand their own story in terms of personal events and decisions. This situates the narrative to be one of personal tragedy at best, which can be read as a 'sin' discourse. To redress this, researchers need to carefully contextualise WIBM accounts within wider structural realities.

In terms of this paper, Dean's story takes place within a national crisis with structural causes. The seventh instalment of the *Homelessness Monitor* for England (Fitzpatrick *et al.*, 2018) details a desperate situation. Changes to welfare systems, especially the implementation of Universal Credit, have heightened what was already a crisis in affordable housing. The most visible form of homelessness is rough sleeping. According to the *Monitor* (2018) the official national estimate increased by 169% since 2010. Political measures have been taken. 2018 saw the passing of the 'Homelessness Reduction Bill' placing statutory duty on councils to help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The 'Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Reduction Taskforce' was set up to ensure action is taken. However, the *Monitor* argues that substantive changes within multiple policy areas are necessary to halt, let alone reverse, the housing crisis in England. These measures would include dramatic changes in building and managing larger numbers of affordable houses, addressing the impacts of changes to welfare and countering the growing exclusion of those on lower incomes from the private rental sector.

Social geography further explicates structural causes of homelessness in the UK. The *Lankelly Chase Foundation's* 'Hard Edges' report (2015) found strong geographic trends when mapping those living with Severe Multiple Deprivations (SMD). Homelessness, addiction and offending were chosen as markers due to the significant impact they have on quality of life and their associated social stigma. Whilst all regions will have some levels of people facing one, two, or all three SMD criteria, local authorities at the top of the incidence list typically have prevalence rates between two to three times that of the national average; SMD incidence appears in clusters. These can be predicted by mapping *types* of poverty and the structural changes that have produced it; whereby patterns of post-industrial decline and the loss of work-based security compound the negative impacts of poverty. Homelessness in Britain is scandalous, but it is geographically predictable, pointing to its underlying structural causes. Those at greatest risk have family and personal factors coinciding with structural disadvantages. WIBM methods need to explicitly contextualise the particular account within its broader socio-economic context.

Conclusion

Recurrent or entrenched homelessness has a devastating impact on quality of life, happiness, wellbeing, health and life expectancy (Bramley *et al.*, 2015). The experience is best attended to by careful attention to the stories of those with first-hand experience; WIBM deepened disclosure and to some extent countered the subjective power differential between researcher and participant. Dean's walking interview highlighted the role community affiliation played in navigating liminal identity. It needed to be heard within its broader social context; one of structural and systematic changes to housing and welfare. Grassroots projects, at their best, situated locally and through sustained efforts to connect people through therapeutic conversations and activities, can go some way to help the victims of a national crisis restore a sense of 'place' and belonging which are essential in successful transition. Resource decisions made by those administrating resources following the Homeless Reduction Bill (2018) need to be mindful of the importance of locality and place in identity and transition.

References

Arthur, L. (2010) *Staff Feelings About a Merger in Higher Education: A Longitudinal Case Study*. Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Lancaster.

Bramley, G., Fitzpatrick, S., Edwards, J., Ford, D., Johnsen, S., Sosenko, F. and Watkins, D. (2015) Hard Edges: Mapping Severe and Multiple Disadvantage in England (London: Lankelly Chase Foundation).

Chauhan A. and Foster J. (2013) Representations of Poverty in British Newspapers: a Case of 'Othering' the Threat?, *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* doi: 10.1002/casp.2179.

Cloke P., Johnsen, S. and May, J. (2010) *Swept Up Lives? Re-Envisioning the Homeless City* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell).

Cornes, M. and Manthorpe J. (2011) 'Tackling Homelessness and Multiple Exclusion', *Community Care* Issue 1886 pp.32-33.

Cotterill, P. and Letherby, G. (1998) Collaborative Writing: The Pleasures and Perils of Working Together, in: M. Ang-Lygate, C. Corrin and M.S. Henry (Eds) *Desperately Seeking Sisterhood: Still Challenging and Building,* pp.118-126. (London: Taylor & Francis).

Fitzpatrick S., Pawson H., Bramley G., Wilcox S., Watts B., and Wood J. (2018) *The Homelessness Monitor: England 2018* (Institute for Social Policy, Environment and Real Estate (I-SPHERE), Heriot-Watt University; City Futures Research Centre, University of New South Wales). April 2018 https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/238700/homelessness_monitor_england_2018.pdf.

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (2007) What is Ethnography?, in: *Ethnography, Principles inPractice 3rd Edition,* pp.1-19. (New York, NY: Routledge).

Gowan, T. (2010*) Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders: Homeless in San Fransisco* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).

Herrmann, P. (2011) *The End of Social Services? Economisation and Managerialism* (Bremen: EVH).

Katz Rothman, B. (2007) Writing Ourselves in Sociology, *Methodological Innovations* 2(1) pp.11-16.

Letherby, G (2003) *Feminist Research in Theory and Practice* (London: Open University Press).

Letherby, G. (2014) 'Feminist Auto/Biography', in: M. Evans, C. Hemmings, M. Henry, H. Johnstone, S. Madhok, A. Plomien and S. Wearing (Eds.) *The SAGE Handbook of Feminist Theory*, pp.45-60. (London: SAGE).

McNaughton, C. (2008) *Transitions Through Homelessness: Lives on the Edge* (London: Palgrave Macmillan).

May, J. (2000) 'Of Nomads and Vagrants: Single Homelessness and Narratives of Home as Place', in: T. Rice and P.L. Price (2008) *The Cultural Geography Reader*, pp.334-342. (Abingdon, Oxon: Taylor & Francis).

O'Neill, M. (2019) *Methods on the Move: Experiencing and Imagining Borders, Risk & Belonging* https://www.walkingborders.com/.

O'Neill, M. and Hubbard, P. (2010) Walking, Sensing, Belonging: Ethno-mimesis as Performative Praxis, *Visual Studies* 25(1) pp.46-58.

Parsons, J.M. and Pettinger, C. (2017) 'Liminal Identities' and Power Struggles, Reflections on the Regulation of Everyday Foodways at a Homeless Centre and the Use of Creative Participatory Research as a Tool of Empowerment and Resistance, in: A. Bleakley, L. Lynch, and G. Whelan (Eds) *Risk and Regulation at the Interface of Medicine and the Arts*, pp171-189. (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing).

Parsons, J.M. (2018) Commensality as a Theatre for Witnessing Change for Criminalised Individuals Working at a Resettlement Scheme, *European Journal of Probation* 10(3) pp.182-198.

Ravenhill, M. (2008) *The Culture of Homelessness* (Ashgate, Hampshire).

Somerville, P. (2013) 'Understanding Homelessness', *Housing, Theory and Society* 30(4) pp.384-415.

Subramani, S. (2019) Practising Reflexivity: Ethics, Methodology and Theory Construction, *Methodological Innovations* May-August pp.1-11.

Stanley, L. and Wise, S. (1993) *Breaking Out Again: Feminist Ontology & Epistemology*. 2nd Edition (London: Routledge).

Stanley, L. and Wise, S. (2003) 'Looking Back and Looking Forward: Some Recent Feminist Sociology Reviewed', *Sociological Research Online* 8(3).

Thomas, A. and Dittmar, H. (1995) 'The Experience of Homeless Women: An Exploration of Housing Histories and the Meaning of Home', *Housing Studies* 10(4) pp.493-515.

Visweswaren, K. (1988) 'Defining Feminist Ethnography', *Inscriptions* 3/4 pp.27-44.

Wacquant, L. (2012) 'The Wedding of Workfare and Prisonfare in the 21st Century: Responses to Critics and Commentators', in: P. Squires. and J. Lea (Eds.) *Criminalization and Advanced Marginality*, pp.243-248. (Bristol: Policy Press).

Wagner B. (2015) *'People Like Us? People Like Them? Contemporary Media Representations of Social Class'*. PhD thesis submitted to Department of Social Care and Social Work, Manchester Metropolitan University.

Book Reviews

Part E

National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (2018)

Permanent Supportive Housing: Evaluating the Evidence for Improving Health Outcomes among People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness.

Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

Permanent supportive housing (PSH) has risen quickly to become the gold standard approach for getting high need individuals off the streets and into stable, long-term housing. In the United States, the number of PSH units doubled between 2007 and 2018, and PSH has been adopted and expanded internationally as well, including in European countries. Defined broadly as ongoing subsidized housing paired with an array of supportive services, PSH embraces the once radical, but thankfully now commonplace idea that housing is the best solution to homelessness.

The rise of PSH is certainly warranted. Evidence that PSH is effective at improving housing stability is unequivocal. Yet, dig a little deeper beyond housing outcomes and the impact of PSH becomes less clear. Studies examining how PSH affects outcomes such as physical and mental health status, substance use, health care costs and criminal justice system involvement have been conducted in a variety of locations, with different populations, and with varying degrees of methodological rigor. In turn, these studies have yielded findings that are all over the map. Trying to make some sense of this map is the task of the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine's report *Permanent Supportive Housing: Evaluating the Evidence for Improving Health Outcomes among People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness.* Written by a committee of subject matter and technical experts, the report seeks to address a straightforward question: To what extent have permanent supportive housing programmes improved health outcomes and affected health care costs in people experiencing homelessness?

The committee's approach to answering this overarching question is to break it down into several smaller and more nuanced questions, such as: What is the evidence that PSH improves health-related utilization and outcomes in homeless persons with serious, chronic or disabling conditions? What characteristics of permanent supportive housing programmes, if any, result in improved health

ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online

outcomes? And what are the key policy barriers and research gaps associated with developing programmes to address the housing and health needs of homeless populations? In turn, the report is divided into chapters that address each of these sub-questions and offers recommendations related to each. The end result is a remarkably thorough document for which the members of the committee are to be commended. The report serves as indispensable reading about the state of the evidence on PSH.

Moreover, in addressing its various sub-questions, the report takes several interesting detours that provide ample food for thought for thought for researchers, policymakers and practitioners alike. One of the most useful of these detours is the discussion of PSH programme characteristics. The report ticks through the evidence on whether variables such as housing configuration (i.e. single-site vs. scattered site) and housing quality have an impact on housing and health outcomes. These are important considerations that often get glossed over in research on PSH, and the inclusion of this section is most welcome in the report. On the other hand, while the report's discussion of the myriad barriers to scaling up PSH in the United States was highly informative for this American reader, it will be of less interest to European readers, who may be flummoxed at the fragmented and siloed state of social and health care spending in the United States.

So what, then, does the report find to be the answer to its central question? Does PSH improve health? The answer provided is less straightforward than the question itself. The report concludes that there is "no substantial evidence that PSH contributes to improved health outcomes, notwithstanding the intuitive logic that it should do so and limited data that it does so for persons with HIV/AIDS." The report goes on to note that "there are significant limitations to the current research and evidentiary base on this topic." In simpler terms: PSH has the *potential* to improve health outcomes, but we don't have a strong enough evidence base to definitively say that it does.

I do not dispute the conclusion that the committee reaches. Yet, one critique I have of the report is that it makes the exceptions it identifies to its overall conclusion seem more minor than I believe they are in reality. The evidence of the impact of PSH on HIV/AIDS is strong and HIV/AIDs is exactly the type of "housing-sensitive" condition that the report goes on to argue should be the focus of future research efforts examining the health impact of PSH. The report also describes evidence from experimental studies of the positive impact of PSH on general well-being, and concludes that, for people with high medical needs, PSH decreases emergency department use and hospital stays. Thus, an alternative framing of the report's conclusion might go something like this: There is some evidence that PSH has a positive impact on health, although the extent and magnitude of that impact may vary across groups and health conditions.

In finding that there is not enough evidence to say definitively that PSH impacts health, the report dutifully pivots to suggest more research to examine the issue in a more rigorous manner. But, in making this pivot, the committee avoids important questions that lie just below the surface of the report: What should be the reasonable expectation of a housing intervention like PSH on non-housing outcomes like health? Should improvements in health outcomes be an explicit goal of PSH programmes towards which services could be better tailored to achieve? Or should we see health improvements as simply a welcome collateral benefit—a bonus—from something works quite well at its main purpose of helping people get into and stay housed? Answers to these questions are more philosophical and political than they are scientific, and thus perhaps beyond the scope of the committee's charge. Nonetheless, these questions are important. In the context of growing interest in so-called social determinants of health, there is an implicit expectation that interventions that address social needs will lead to health improvements. But, we should be wary of using such logic as the basis for justifying social interventions. There is a simple and undeniable benefit in making sure people who are hungry have food to eat and that those who are homeless have a decent place to live. We would do well to not forget this uncomplicated way of thinking about the impact of PSH.

Thomas Byrne
Boston University, USA

Heather Larkin, Amanda Aykanian and Calvin L. Streeter Eds. (2019)

Homelessness Prevention and Intervention in Social Work: Policies, Programs and Practices

Gewerbestrasse, Switzerland: Springer Nature Switzerland AG, 412 pp.

The provenance of this book begins in 2013 when the *American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare* set-up a working party to ascertain prevailing and future 'Grand Challenges in Social Work' – 12 were identified, the fifth was 'End Homelessness' (Uehara *et al.*, 2013; Uehara *et al.*, 2014; Henwood *et al.*, 2015). In support of this challenge the *National Centre for Excellence in Homelessness Services* launched the *National Homelessness Social Work Initiative* (NHSWI). Led by a national consortium of schools of social work, the overarching aim of the NHSWI was to develop and apply 'innovative strategies' to 'service and policy design and social work education'. In the pursuit of this objective, the co-editors of the book under review were commissioned by the NHSWI to examine social work curricula in colleges and universities across the USA. They discovered – or more likely had their suspicions confirmed – that homelessness featured at best 'sporadically and inconsistently' and was often 'left out altogether' (Larkin *et al.*, 2016, *passim*). They saw this as both a challenge and opportunity to produce a textbook that would encourage the integration of homelessness in social work teaching: *Homelessness Prevention and Intervention in Social Work* is the outcome of this perceived opportunity.

In their Preface the editors claim that their book can be used either 'as a foundational text for a full course on homelessness' or as 'a companion text for courses on poverty in the USA'. How well does *Homelessness Prevention and Intervention* meet these aims?

As a course text, its electronic format (strongly promoted by the publishers) and the accompanying e-learning material are salient. The latter includes chapter content summaries, keyword lists and suggestions for both essay questions and for group and/or class-based activities, plus the identification of key readings – all potentially enhance the pedagogic experience. From among the above, the class based/ group 'activities' stand out, addressing as they do the important question of 'how-to-do' social work with homeless people. The electronic version seems to

be widely available as part of a library bulk purchase agreement with the publishers, Springer. Even my own university, which has no social work, social policy or sociology department, has a copy accessible to all accredited library users.

A basic requirement of a course text is that it should be reasonably comprehensive in covering the basics of the topic under consideration and have a logical and coherent structure – in the parlance of some educationalists, it 'should tell a story' – and indeed, in that respect, the three-part division of this book promises an appropriate organisational arrangement. Part 1, focusing on the 'characteristics and service needs of homeless people', begins with an introductory chapter covering the history of homelessness in the USA, the rudiments of US homelessness legislation, definition and enumeration, and the identification of homeless subpopulations. The following three chapters respectively examine trauma, health disparities and the service needs of homeless people. Part 2 deals with 'individual, community and systems responses', examining a diverse range of issues including: affordable housing, homelessness discourses, community based strategies, criminalisation and the financing of innovation; it also includes a case study chapter on Los Angeles and New York. Part 3, the longest, considers 'the delivery of homelessness services'. The eight chapters that make up this section of the book move from critical time intervention, through multisector collaborations, trauma informed care delivery, to street outreach. There then follow two chapters on aspects of youth homelessness and a related chapter on homeless students. Part 3 concludes with a reflection on 'practice dilemmas, successes and challenges' in the delivery of homeless services.

It is a moot point, however, as to whether this book so constructed constitutes an adequate 'course text'. While many individual chapters glow with erudition, the book does not display the level of integration and coverage that might be expected of a 'textbook'. The treatment of homelessness as a subject of study, *sui generis,* is patchy and there are many absences. The book's target audience – trainee social workers – might condition choices as to content, yet it is difficult to comprehend why there are two chapters (2 &13) on trauma and three (15,16 &17) on youth homelessness, yet no chapters on prevention, on gender or sexuality, or on ethnicity or race –despite these issues being highlighted in the introductory Chapter 1. Prevention is prominent in the book's title, it receives 102 mentions, yet these are by and large "in-passing"; there is no chapter devoted to prevention and only one sub-section and that consisting solely of a five-line paragraph (p.10). Additionally, given its importance in the present era, Housing First though frequently mentioned (70 times), is surprisingly relatively neglected given that its success is closely linked with the provision of parallel, multi-agency assertive support systems (discussed in Chapter 12) in which social work would be expected to play a prominent role. These are puzzling lacunae.

There are further features that militate against this book's 'foundational text' status. For instance, there is a striking lack of integration between chapters; each chapter seems to have been written in isolation, the degree of cross-referencing is miniscule and their sequencing is unexplained. These are issues that the editors might have been expected to address; they serve to highlight the lack of participation by the editors in the writing of this book – their written contribution is confined to four multi-authored chapters and to a three and half page Preface. The book cries out for more overt editorial intervention and guidance.

The book fares better as a supporting text, for a course on poverty (as the editors suggest) certainly, but also importantly for a course on social work and homelessness and indeed as a 'reference text' for students of homelessness wishing to learn about the actual and potential contribution of social work. The main strength here lies in the substantive chapters and their attendant comprehensive reference lists (exceeding six pages in four chapters). As noted previously, there is much erudition in these chapters, the authors are after all experts in their fields: if you want to learn about trauma and homelessness, about young people and homelessness this text might well be your first port of call. Three chapters in particular registered with this reviewer; all three successfully meld 'concept' with 'practice', a binary that is frequently difficult to bridge. First, Chapter 6 by Baiocchi and Argüello examines 'street talk and the politics of service provision' persuasively arguing for the addition of 'social talk' to Teresa Gowan's celebrated typology of 'sin, sick and systems thought' (Gowan, 2010). The chapter goes on to explore the ways in which this conceptualisation might enhance social work practice. Second, Chapter 9 by Aykanian and Fogel on the 'criminalisation of homelessness' is notable for its concise history of and trenchant rebuttal of criminalisation policies, and for its proposals for alternative approaches, involving social workers, in ending anti-homelessness programmes. Third, the concluding Chapter 18 by Tiderington on 'practice dilemmas, successes and challenges' draws on a 2015 National Institute of Mental Health's study to examines the difficulties and predicaments faced by frontline workers in the implementation and delivery of homelessness services. While *Homelessness Prevention and Implementation for Social Work* may not realise exactly the role anticipated by its editors, it is nevertheless a valuable reference text, accessible and instructive for both homelessness researcher and practitioner.

Gowan, T. (2010) *Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders: Homelessness in San Francisco* (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press)

Henwood, B.F. *et al.* (2015) The Grand Challenge of Ending Homelessness, American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare, Working Paper No. 9.

Larkin, H. *et al.* (2016) Responding to the Grand Challenge to End Homelessness: The National Homelessness Social Work Initiative, *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services* 97(3) pp.153-159.

Uehara, E. *et al.* (2013) Grand Challenges in Social Work, *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research* 4(3) pp.165-170.

Uehara, E. *et al.* (2014) Identifying and Tracking Grand Challenges for Social Work, American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare, Working Paper No. 9.

Joe Doherty
University of St Andrews

Y-Foundation (2019)

Homelessness in 2030: Essays on Possible Futures

Helsinki: Y-Foundation

If, thirty years ago when widespread homelessness was first emerging in Global North nations, we had known what we know now, what would we have done? If we had known that people would be sleeping on the streets of major cities, if we had known that there would be intergenerational homelessness among families, if we had known that people ill with behavioural and physical health disorders would spend years living in hostels and shelters and die decades earlier than their housed peers, would we have done things differently? Would we have invested more in affordable housing, changed our immigration policies, beefed up welfare, better supported children, and expanded human rights? Or, would we have allowed events, the market and political dynamics to run their course?

Homelessness 2030 is a thought-provoking collection of essays on what homelessness *might* look like ten years from now -- and what will have gotten us there. The authors are all people with extensive knowledge of homelessness, both historical and contemporary. They have years of experience researching the issue and developing policies and practices to solve it. And in **Homelessness 2030**, they give us, if not every possible eventuality as to where we will be on homelessness ten years from now, plenty of food for thought about what could be done now to either achieve or prevent their visions of the future.

The book is broken down by hopeful and dystopian visions, individual national perspectives and models and policies for change. In the essays that focus on a future in which homelessness declines or disappears, the authors offer a range of ideas – some more practical than others. If, for example, nations have leadership that is committed to solving the problem and a strategic plan to get there; dedicate adequate resources; use data to measure both what works and what progress is being made; target prevention and assistance effectively; and use only evidence-based practices, then yes, homelessness can be ended. Others see the answer as lying more in the achievement of justice and human rights. If there is an adequate

ISSN 2030-2762 / ISSN 2030-3106 online

supply of affordable housing; a just society in which poverty and homelessness are not criminalized; a guaranteed income for everyone; and if people can get all the services they need, then again, homelessness can be ended.

On the other hand, things could go poorly in the future. National disputes, border-tightening, anti-migration and -immigration forces, xenophobia, and changing economics could undermine social supports. If governments are diverted to wars or shift to authoritarian as opposed to progressive political systems; if there are serious financial crises and the market is relied upon to address social problems and supply housing; and if aggressive policing rather than services becomes the primary approach to homelessness, things will go poorly for low income people. It is possible, in such scenarios, that homelessness will go down, as people without regular housing are deported, arrested, conscripted or the like. But certainly, that will not be ending homelessness in the way we all desire.

The authors point out a host of other interconnected things that are known to end homelessness and, if implemented now, would reduce numbers. Housing First (providing housing without pre-conditions) is cited repeatedly and implementing both the specific practice and the general approach of Housing First are thought to be necessities for reducing homelessness in the future. There is a lot of discussion of preventing homelessness, either through a robust economic and social support system for all lower income people, or through a more targeted approach that would only be accurate with more research. Demographic issues such as the aging of the homeless population will have to be taken into account, as they will necessitate different housing and service strategies. Many authors noted that the supply of social housing, which is dwindling most places, will have to be significantly increased.

There were a few things affecting homelessness that were less frequently mentioned. One was employment. Housing affordability is a combination of the cost of the housing and people's incomes. Rents may go up, but if incomes increase commensurately, housing remains affordable. In much of the world, that income will have to come from employment. The authors discuss income benefits, but few recommend employment strategies. Mentions of climate change were surprisingly infrequent. Climate-related movements of people and loss of housing supply may occur because of coastal flooding, fires, and shifts in industry and agriculture. All of those would impact homelessness. While there was a general call for more services and treatment, there was little emphasis on the role of the health care sector. Particularly where there is unsheltered homelessness and as the population ages, homelessness becomes a significant public health issue with major cost implications. The health care sector could be a major player in solutions to homelessness moving forward.

It must also be said that the most common suggestion was to do what Finland does.

I would not quibble with the advisability of making many of changes that the authors of these papers suggest and of struggling at all costs to avoid the dystopian disasters they describe. Many prescribe the need for comprehensive and systemic across-the-board changes; undoubtedly these would be effective. I cannot help but reflect, however, that in the United States at least, widespread homelessness is a relatively new phenomenon in the modern era, having emerged only in the early 1980s. The period prior to that could by no means be characterized as perfect: there was poverty, inequality, racism, police violence, poor health and behavioural health treatment, veteran issues and other problems. Justice was imperfect, and only a sparse menu of rights and benefits was available to poor people. One thing we did not have, however, was a shortage of affordable housing. We had enough affordable housing. And we did not have homelessness. Perhaps the smartest thing we could do over the next ten years would be to concentrate on this one solution.

Nan Roman
President & CEO
National Alliance to End Homelessness
Washington DC, USA

This publication has received financial support from the European Union
Programme for Employment and Social Innovation “EaSi” (2014-2020)

European Observatory on Homelessness

European Journal of Homelessness

The European Journal of Homelessness provides a critical analysis of policy and practice on homelessness in Europe for policy makers, practitioners, researchers and academics. The aim is to stimulate debate on homelessness and housing exclusion at the European level and to facilitate the development of a stronger evidential base for policy development and innovation. The journal seeks to give international exposure to significant national, regional and local developments and to provide a forum for comparative analysis of policy and practice in preventing and tackling homelessness in Europe. The journal will also assess the lessons for Europe which can be derived from policy, practice and research from elsewhere.

European Journal of Homelessness is published by FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless. An electronic version can be downloaded from FEANTSA's website www.feantsaresearch.org.

FEANTSA works with the European Commission, the contracting authority for the four-year partnership agreement under which this publication has received funding.

The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.

ISSN: 2030-3106 (Online)

European Federation of National Associations Working with the Homeless AISBL
Fédération Européenne d'Associations Nationales Travaillant avec les Sans-Abri AISBL

194, Chaussée de Louvain ■ 1210 Brussels ■ Belgium
Tel.: + 32 2 538 66 69 ■ Fax: + 32 2 539 41 74
research@feantsa.org ■ www.feantsaresearch.org

FEANTSA