

Conceptualisation and Measurement of Homelessness in Europe

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Overview of Presentation

- The EU, the European Observatory on Homelessness and European studies on measurement of homelessness
- ETHOS, the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion and “ETHOS Light” (harmonised definition for statistical purposes)
- Approaches to defining and measuring homelessness in different European member states
- The Census recommendations and results of the 2011 Censuses of Population and Housing regarding homelessness
- Conclusions

The European Union (EU)

- 28 countries (known as member states), 24 official languages, 18 countries have Euro as their currency
- EU covers over 4 million km² and has 503 million inhabitants, World's third largest population after China and India
- Considerable differences of wealth and welfare regimes
- Principle of subsidiarity: Tackling homelessness is national (or even local) responsibility, but EU can promote exchange of information and provide support for member states to fight homelessness at national and regional level



The European Observatory on Homelessness

- Organised by FEANTSA and financed by the European Commission
- Core group of six researchers from DK, DE, IE, PT, HU and the UK coordinated by the speaker
- Main tasks each year:
 - ▶ European Research Conference
 - ▶ European Journal of Homelessness (2 issues)
 - ▶ Comparative research (2014: Extent and Profile of Homelessness in European Member States. A Statistical Update)
- All publications available for free online:
www.feantsaresearch.org

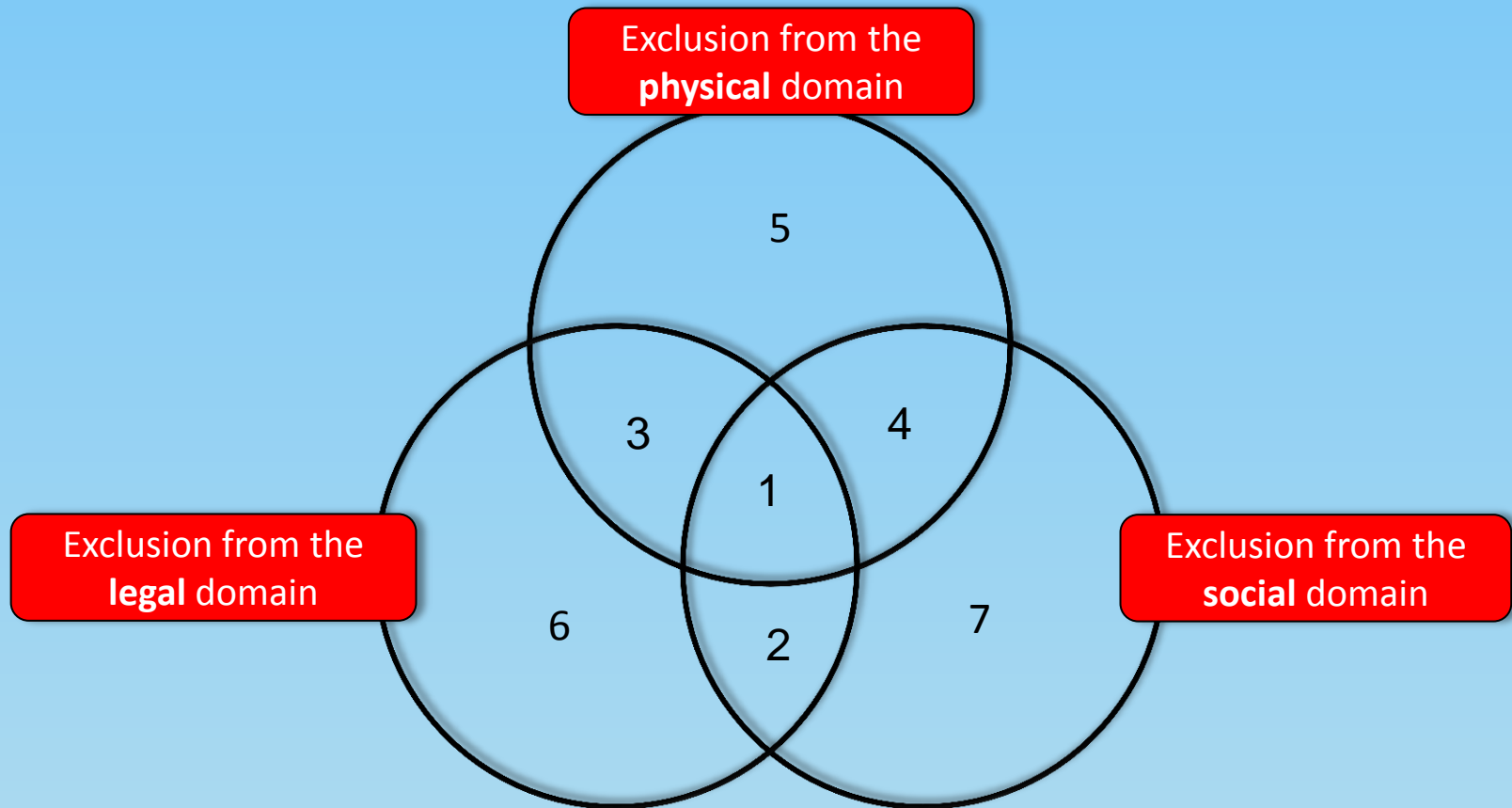
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ETHOS - The European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion

- Developed by Bill Edgar and Henk Mert (2005) in close cooperation with FEANTSA's data collection working group
- Distinguishes four broad categories:
 - ▶ Rooflessness
 - ▶ Houselessness
 - ▶ Inadequate Housing
 - ▶ Insecure Housing
- Accommodation based but based conceptually on the exclusion from three different spheres which constitute a home:
 - ▶ Physical domain: decent dwelling (or space) adequate to meet the needs of the household
 - ▶ Social domain: being able to maintain privacy and enjoy social relations
 - ▶ Legal domain: having exclusive possession, security of occupation and legal title

The Domains of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion



Seven Theoretical Categories of Homelessness

Conceptual Category	Operational Category	Physical Domain	Legal Domain	Social Domain	
Homelessness	1	Rooflessness	No dwelling (roof)	No legal title to a space for exclusive possession	No private and safe personal space for social relations
	2	Houselessness	Has a place to live, fit for habitation	No legal title to a space for exclusive possession	No private and safe personal space for social relations
Housing exclusion	3	Insecure and Inadequate housing	Has a place to live (not secure and unfit for habitation)	No security of tenure	Has space for social relations
	4	Inadequate housing and social isolation within a legally occupied dwelling	Inadequate dwelling (unfit for habitation)	Has legal title and/or security of tenure	No private and safe personal space for social relations
	5	Inadequate housing (secure tenure)	Inadequate dwelling (dwelling unfit for habitation)	Has legal title and/or security of tenure	Has space for social relations
	6	Insecure housing (adequate housing)	Has a place to live	No security of tenure	Has space for social relations
	7	Social isolation within a secure and adequate context	Has a place to live	Has legal title and/or security of tenure	No private and safe personal space for social relations

ETHOS – European Typology on Homelessness and Housing Exclusion

Conceptual Category		Operational Category		Living Situation
ROOFLESS	1	People living rough	1.1	Public space or external space
	2	People staying in a night shelter	2.1	Night shelter
HOUSELESS	3	People in accommodation for the homeless	3.1	Homeless hostel
			3.2	Temporary accommodation
			3.3	Transitional supported accommodation
	4	People in women's Shelter	4.1	Women's shelter accommodation
	5	People in accommodation for immigrants	5.1	Temporary accommodation / reception centres
5.2			Migrant workers accommodation	
6	People due to be released from institutions	6.1	Penal institutions	
		6.2	Medical institutions	
		6.3	Children's institutions / homes	
7	People receiving longer-term support (due to homelessness)	7.1	Residential care for older homeless people	
		7.2	Supported accommodation for formerly homeless persons	
INSECURE	8	People living in insecure accommodation	8.1	Temporarily with family/friends
			8.2	No legal (sub)tenancy
			8.3	Illegal occupation of land
9	People living under threat of eviction	9.1	Legal orders enforced (rented)	
		9.2	Re-possession orders (owned)	
10	People living under threat of violence	10.1	Police recorded incidents	
INADEQUATE	11	People living in temporary/non-conventional structures	11.1	Mobile homes
			11.2	Non-conventional building
			11.3	Temporary structure
12	People living in unfit housing	12.1	Occupied dwelling unfit for habitation	
13	People living in extreme overcrowding	13.1	Highest national norm of overcrowding	

“ETHOS Light”

A Harmonised Definition for Statistical Purposes

- Developed in context of study on “*Measurement of Homelessness at European Union Level*” (2007) funded by European Commission
- Explicit aim to be compatible with Recommendations for Census 2010/11 on Population and Housing
- Shorter version with explicit focus on what is feasible to be measured
- Insecure and inadequate housing is left out, but some categories are included as they are seen as constituting homelessness in a number of EU countries (people about to leave institutions with nowhere to go, “non-conventional housing” and sharing temporarily with friends or relatives because of lack of housing)

“ETHOS Light” – Harmonised Definition of Homelessness for “Measurement of Homelessness at European Union Level” Study

Operational Category		Living Situation		Definition
1	People living rough	1	Public space / external space	Living in the streets or public spaces without a shelter that can be defined as living quarters
2	People in emergency accommodation	2	Overnight Shelters	People with no place of usual residence who move frequently between various types of accommodation
3	People living in accommodation for the homeless	3	Homeless Hostels	Where the period of stay is less than one year *
		4	Temporary Accommodation	
		5	Transitional Supported Accommodation	
		6	Women’s shelter or refuge accommodation	
4	People living in institutions	7	Health care institutions	Stay longer than needed due to lack of housing
		8	Penal institutions	No housing available prior to release
5	People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing	9	Mobile homes	Where the accommodation is used due to a lack of housing and is not the person’s usual place of residence
		10	Non-conventional building	
		11	Temporary structure	
6	Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing)	12	Conventional housing, but not the person’s usual place of residence	Where the accommodation is used due to a lack of housing and is not the person’s usual place of residence

* The period of one year was chosen to allow consistency with UNECE/EUROSTAT Census recommendations

“ETHOS Light” – Relevance in Different Member States

(2014 Study covering CZ, DK, FL, FR, DE, HU, IE, IT, NL, PL, PT, SI, ES, SE, and UK)

Operational Category		Living Situation		Use and Data at National Level
1	People living rough	1	Public space / external space	Accepted as homeless in all countries, but counted separately only in few
2	People in emergency accommodation	2	Overnight Shelters	Accepted everywhere and data available (sometimes mixed with OC 3)
3	People living in accommodation for the homeless	3	Homeless Hostels	3), 4) and 5) defined as homeless in most countries, data available in most countries (but note “service paradox”) 6) is most controversial, excluded in 6 of 15 countries
		4	Temporary Accommodation	
		5	Transitional Supported Accommodation	
		6	Women’s shelter or refuge accommodation	
4	People living in institutions	7	Health care institutions	Difficult to measure and often not included, data available in 4 of 15 countries
		8	Penal institutions	
5	People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing	9	Mobile homes	Included in definition of homelessness in most countries (in some even as part of OC 1). Data available only for 4 of 15 countries
		10	Non-conventional building	
		11	Temporary structure	
6	Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing)	12	Conventional housing, but not the person’s usual place of residence	Defined as homeless in a number of countries while excluded from definition in others (almost 50/50), data available only for 5 of 15 countries

Methods of Measuring Homelessness in EU Member States

- ▶ Use of administrative data (mostly service users statistics) for national numbers and/or profile of service users
 - ▶ Annual shelter statistics in **Denmark** and **Slovenia**
 - ▶ PATH (Pathway Accommodation and Support System) in **Ireland** records all service user data from statutory and non-statutory services for homeless people (rolled out nationally in 2014)
 - ▶ Central online data base of all registered social services in **Hungary** (homeless clients may be analysed separately)
 - ▶ Central data collections of service users by different social services in **Spain** and **Portugal** (Assistencia Médica Internacional, Caritas etc.; homeless clients may be analysed separately)
 - ▶ The **Dutch** National Statistical Office uses a combination of data from the national population register (covering data on night shelter users), a data base on homeless benefit claimants and data from the national alcohol and drug information services for national estimates on rough sleepers
 - ▶ A core set of data of NGO providers of services for homeless people is analysed each year by the national umbrella organisation in **Germany** to produce statistics on the profile of service users

Methods of Measuring Homelessness in EU Member States

- ▶ Recurrent surveys (examples); mostly point in time (or week) - snapshots
 - ▶ Collection of individual data:
 - ▶ In **Denmark** and **Sweden** all potential contact services (like homeless shelters, addiction treatment centers, psychiatric facilities, municipal social centers, social drop-in cafes etc.) are asked to document information on homeless clients in individualized questionnaires within a certain week. Double counting is excluded by unique identifiers. Surveys are repeated bi-annually in Denmark and every six years in Sweden.
 - ▶ In **France** and **Spain** a sample of randomly selected users of free food services and emergency accommodation is asked to complete a large questionnaire and results are then projected to all cities with more than 20,000 inhabitants. In both countries such surveys were conducted twice, last in 2012 and before in 2005 (Spain) / 2001 (France).
 - ▶ In Budapest (**Hungary**) every 3rd of February each year a homelessness survey has been conducted since 1999. It is carried out by services for homeless people and also covers rough sleepers; participation is voluntary for services and clients and a self-completion questionnaire is used.

Methods of Measuring Homelessness in EU Member States

- Recurrent surveys (examples); mostly point in time (or week) - snapshots
 - ▶ Collection of aggregated data:
 - ▶ In **Finland** all municipalities have been asked to provide an elaborated estimate of the number of homeless people every year (since 1987) as part of a general housing market survey.
 - ▶ In the **German** regional state North Rhine-Westphalia (17.8 million inhabitants) a survey is conducted 30 June each year among all municipalities and NGO services for homeless people.
 - ▶ In **Poland** a number of homelessness surveys were conducted by national government between 2009 and 2013, but approaches differed each time
- Local surveys and one-off surveys
 - ▶ Many regional and local surveys with different methodologies in **Spain**, same but less frequent in **Portugal**
 - ▶ Important first national survey in **Italy** covering canteens and emergency shelters
- Very few data on prevalence / past experience of homelessness
 - ▶ Only recent source: Scottish household survey and UK Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey 2012
 - ▶ Some data from Survey of English Housing in 1990s and Census data in France from 2006 (reporting life-time prevalence of 5 %)

Covering Homelessness in the 2011 Population and Housing Census

- Census authorities did not make use of recommendations developed by EU project on Measuring Homelessness
 - ▶ Came too late in the process but would also have required specific effort
- Main focus of Census authorities: to cover the whole population (including homeless people) but not to document extent of homelessness
- Producing data on homelessness was not made obligatory in Census regulations
- Considerable effort was made to cover homeless people in a number of countries (for some it was the first time)
- In other countries no attempt was made at all
- In some countries homeless people were covered by special surveys, but results were then lumped together with other groups of people living in institutions

Definition of Homelessness by CES Census Recommendations

Definition of *“The homeless with no place of usual residence”*:

1. *Primary homelessness (or rooflessness): this category includes persons living in the streets without a shelter that would fall within the scope of living quarters.*
2. *Secondary homelessness: this category may include persons with no place of usual residence who move frequently between various types of accommodations (including dwellings, shelters, institutions for the homeless or other living quarters). This category includes persons living in private dwellings but reporting “no usual address” on their census form.*

EU 2011 Population and Housing Census

Census Data

Period of time Year 2011

Housing arrangements ▶ Homeless

Geographical area ▼

Belgium	0
Bulgaria	287
Czech Republic	11,496
Denmark	0
Germany	0
Estonia	864
Ireland	2,045
Greece	3,381
Spain	0
France	16,339
Croatia	137
Italy	34,653
Cyprus	0
Latvia	0
Lithuania	857
Luxembourg	274
Hungary	5,571
Malta	2
Netherlands	0
Austria	5,811
Poland	8,699
Portugal	696
Romania	1,524
Slovenia	0
Slovakia	23,483
Finland	0
Sweden	0
United Kingdom	240 u
Iceland	761
Liechtenstein	0
Norway	0
Switzerland	0

c - confidential; d - see metadata; n - not significant; u - low reliability; z - not applicable

[Back](#)

[Next](#)

Conclusions

- ▶ ETHOS provides a good conceptual framework for defining homelessness and housing exclusion and has also been acknowledged as a useful typology in other parts of the (developed) world.
- ▶ Differentiation between rooflessness and houselessness and between homelessness (covering these two categories) and housing exclusion has been helpful for the global context as well.
- ▶ ETHOS Light is somewhat easier to apply for measurement purposes but still almost nowhere in Europe the full set of living situations is accepted as homelessness and covered in attempts to measure the extent of homelessness.
- ▶ There are ongoing debates which living situation should be included or left out. However, it provides us with a useful grid to prevent us comparing and combining situations which are not comparable and helps us clarifying what we are speaking about.

Conclusions

- ▶ Practices in EU member states of measuring homelessness still differ to a large extent, but different types of approaches used by several member states may be identified.
- ▶ Simple methodological issues as the difference between point in time counts or coverage of a week versus annual prevalence, households versus individual persons etc. still need special attention, as different practices prevail.
- ▶ It is easier to collect valid information on the profile (at least of several subgroups) and on trends of homelessness than to determine the overall extent of homelessness. Homelessness has increased in most EU countries where trends were measured, between 2009 and 2014.

Thank you for your attention!

- ❁ Questions?
- ❁ Comments?
- ❁ Criticism?
- ❁ Suggestions?



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