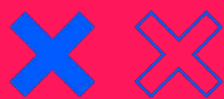


ND XPA



A Challenge-based Idea
Accelerator & Toolbox



Desk research report

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01



Executive Summary

01. Executive Summary



This research on homelessness, focused on cities, demonstrates we face a very complex problem that affects the analysis and the search for solutions based on social entrepreneurship. We can first see this complexity when trying to grasp it from a European perspective. There is a lack of a standard definition of the concept of homelessness, thus there is no European-wide approach to tackle the problem from a public policy focus. This is why we think the homelessness problem, being a global one that keeps worsening over time, has to be seized, analyzed and tackled from a city perspective.

The main takeaways from the research for each city are:

Barcelona:

Homelessness in Barcelona is a growing problem, especially affecting young people of North-African origin who arrived in the city as underage. However, it also has a chronic component of people suffering from alcoholism, drug addictions, mental health, and domestic violence.

In the case of Barcelona, the City Council and its social services play a central role in coordinating, funding and delivering support for homelessness. There are several large organizations providing services and support from the private sector as well. Social entrepreneurship solutions are very rare and contested.

Paris:

The problem of homelessness in Paris is mainly due to the high cost of real estate and the increasing saturation of social and very social housing, which mainly affects the low-income and intermittent population.. There is no typical profile of the homeless person because this phenomenon affects a diversity of people with different social characteristics and situations of exclusion from housing. However, the statistics allow us to highlight some characteristics of the homeless: the homeless are more often men (3/5), foreigners are overrepresented (52%), people are mainly aged between 30 and 50 years (74%). A large majority of them are isolated (more than 2/3 live alone).

01. Executive Summary



Several public or associative services already exist to address this problem in Paris: social monitoring, shelter, etc. However, there is a need to better coordinate efforts in order to exploit the limited resources and the continuous growth in the number of homeless people, as well as to continue to lobby the government to promote social housing programs and find more affordable housing solutions.

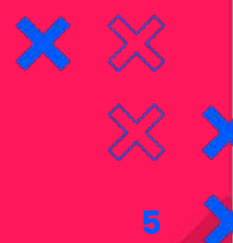
Ghent:

The number of homeless people in Ghent is unexpectedly high when looking at the official data, taking into account the size of the city. Homelessness affects quite equally all age groups from 18 to 65 and the majority of people have Belgian nationality or legal status.

In terms of current practices to tackle the problem, on top of a recent shift towards a 'Housing first' policy, a "bed, bath and bread" symptomatic approach is applied that consequently has created a network of organisations providing for different basic needs of the homeless population.

The problem in the three cities have continuities and differences in the root causes and areas of intervention, that we try to summarize in this table:

	Root Causes	Areas of intervention
Continuities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of affordable housing • Increasing figures of homeless People and population at risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing-first solutions • Lack of resources and funding • Need for better coordination among actors
Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationality or legal status • Age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix of public-private organizations in the field



02



Methodology and definitions



02. Methodology and definitions



The first fact we find is that there is not a common institutional definition of homelessness. This has critical implications on how homelessness is measured in different countries as well as the legal framework within which to design and deliver public and private responses to this social challenge.

In our research, we have come up with several intents to define and limit the scope of the homelessness issue. For instance, an “**holistic**” approach provided by the Canadian Homelessness Hub that states it as “the situation of an individual, family, or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect means and ability to acquire it.”¹

Then, we also find two definitions that put **housing** in the centre of the problem. On the one hand, in its Recommendations for the Censuses of Population and Housing, the United Nations Economic and Social Council² identify homeless people under two broad groups:

- Primary homelessness (or rooflessness). This category includes persons living in the streets without a shelter that would fall within the scope of living quarters;
- Secondary homelessness. This category may include persons with no place of usual residence who move frequently between various types of accommodations (including dwellings, shelters and 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.



1. <https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/homelessness-101/what-homelessness>
2. https://unstats.un.org/unsd/censuskb20/Attachments/2009MPHASIS_ECE_Homeless-GUID25ae612721cc4c2c87b536892e1ed1e1.pdf



02. Methodology and definitions



On the other hand, ETHOS (European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion)³ was developed through a review of existing definitions of homelessness and the realities of homelessness which service providers are faced with on a daily basis. ETHOS categories, therefore, attempt to cover all living situations which amount to forms of homelessness across Europe:

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

With this lack of definition, we have come up with a scheme that combines the above and that could be used to understand and focus on potential solutions to homelessness based on the multidimensional nature of the problem.



3. <https://www.feantsa.org/en/toolkit/2005/04/01/ethos-typology-on-homelessness-and-housing-exclusion>

02. Methodology and definitions



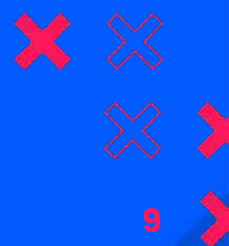
Focus on causes (1)	Focus on effects (2)	Focus on needs (3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural factors • Poverty • Housing • System failures • Personal circumstances and relational problems • Domestic violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rooflessness (without a shelter of any kind, sleeping rough) • houselessness (with a place to sleep but temporary in institutions or shelter) • living in insecure housing (threatened with severe exclusion due to insecure tenancies, eviction, domestic violence) • living in inadequate housing (in caravans on illegal campsites, in unfit housing, in extreme overcrowding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Women • Hygiene • Family links • Jobs



(1) <https://homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/homelessness-101/causes-homelessness>

(2) <https://www.feantsa.org/en/toolkit/2005/04/01/ethos-typology-on-homelessness-and-housing-exclusion>

(3) <http://www.bcn.cat/barcelonainclusiva/ca/xarxa2.html>



03



Homelessness in the European context

03. Homelessness in the European context



As mentioned, since there is not a single definition for Europe, the data have to be observed at a country level. And each of those figures is based on partial data that might be NGO census, local authorities' estimations, etc.

However, one thing is clear: we are facing a huge problem in all European countries. The latest data available, taking into account the limitations described in the previous section, makes evident the scope of this problem⁴:

Table HC 3.1.1a: Estimated number of homeless people, 2020 or latest year available

	Year	Number of homeless	Homeless as % of total population ¹	Figures include more than persons 1) living rough, 2) living in emergency accommodation, and 3) living in accommodation for the homeless?
Australia	2016	116,427	0.48%	Yes
Austria	2019	22,580	0.25%	Yes
Brazil	2015	101,854	0.05%	Not provided
Canada (2)	2016	129,127	0.36%	No
Chile	2019	14,013	0.07%	No
Colombia	2019	13,252	0.03%	Yes
Costa Rica	2020	3,387	0.07%	Not provided
Croatia	2013	462	0.01%	No
Czech Republic (3)	2019	23,830	0.22%	Yes*
Denmark	2019	6,431	0.11%	Yes
Estonia	2011	864	0.06%	No
Finland	2018	5,482	0.10%	Yes
France	2012	141,500	0.22%	No
Germany (4)	2018	337,000	0.41%	Yes
Greece	2009	21,216	0.19%	Yes
Hungary	2014	10,068	0.10%	Yes
Iceland	2017	349	0.10%	Yes
Ireland	2020	5,873	0.12%	No
Israel	2020	3,471	0.04%	Yes
Italy (5)	2014	50,724	0.08%	No
Japan	2020	3,992	0.00%	No
Latvia	2017	6,877	0.35%	No
Lithuania	2011	857	0.03%	No
Luxembourg (6)	2014	2,059	0.37%	Yes
Mexico	2010	40,911	0.04%	Not provided
The Netherlands	2018	39,300	0.23%	Yes
New Zealand	2018	41,644	0.86%	Yes
Norway	2016	3,909	0.07%	Yes
Poland	2019	30,330	0.08%	Yes
Portugal	2019	7,107	0.07%	No
Slovak Republic	2011	23,483	0.44%	Yes
Slovenia	2019	3,799	0.18%	No
Spain	2013	22,938	0.05%	No
Sweden	2017	33,250	0.33%	Yes
United States (7)	2020	580,466	0.18%	No
United Kingdom: (8)				
England	2020 (Q1-Q4)	(289,800 households)	(1.25% households)	Yes, but limited to certain priority categories; includes households threatened with homelessness
Northern Ireland	2020 (July-Dec)	(7,989 households)	(1.10% households)	Yes, but limited to certain priority categories; includes households threatened with homelessness and people living in temporary accommodation
Scotland	2020 (April-Sept)	(27,796 households)	(1.14% households)	Yes; includes households threatened with homelessness and people living in temporary accommodation as of 30 Sept
Wales	2019-20	(22,392 households)	(1.66% households)	Yes, but limited to certain priority categories; includes households threatened with homelessness (Section 66) and people living in temporary accommodation (Section 73)

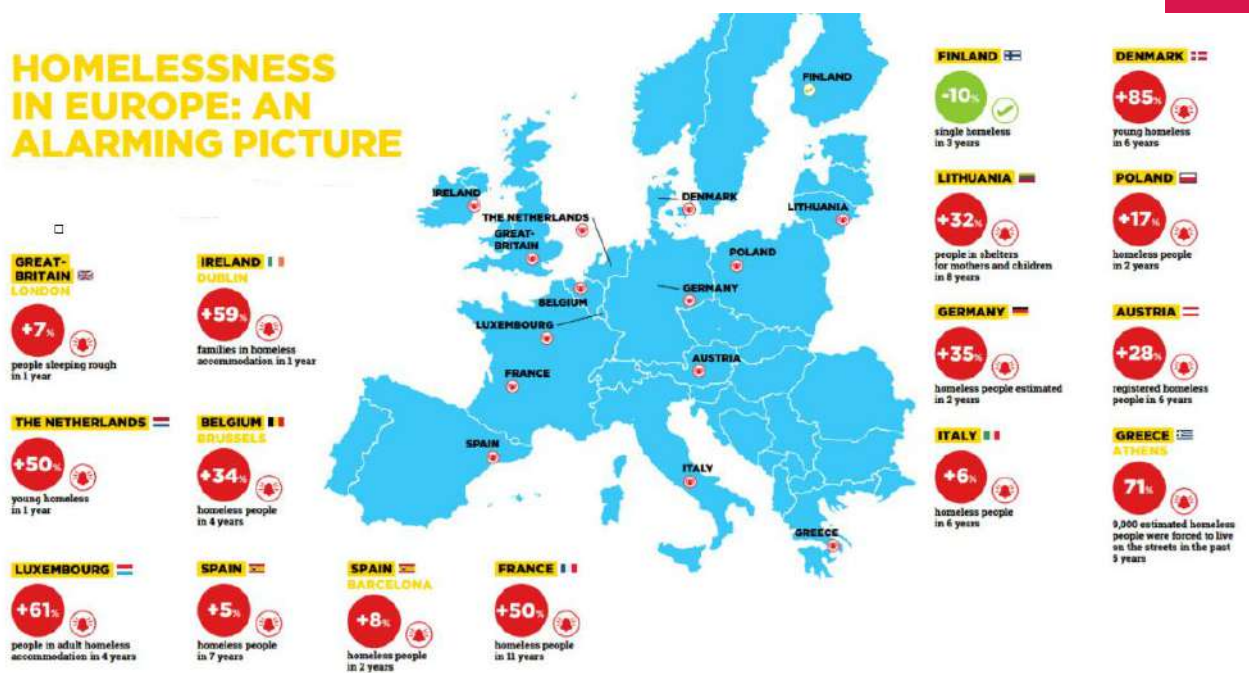


4. <https://www.oecd.org/els/family/HC3-1-Homeless-population.pdf>

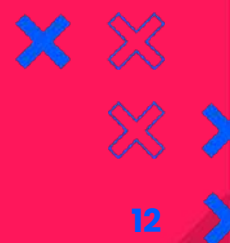
03. Homelessness in the European context



In view of this situation, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on 24 November 2020 where MEPs call on the EU and its member states to stop homelessness by 2030⁵. They advocate an EU framework of national strategies and call on EU countries to decriminalize homelessness and continue to raise funding to tackle the problem. In this diagnostic, the European Parliament considers that over 700,000 persons face homelessness each night in Europe. This figure has increased 70% over a decade.



5. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20201120IPR92124/eu-s-hould-set-goal-to-end-homelessness-by-2030>



04



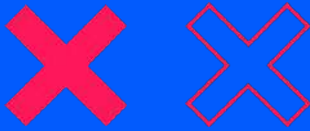
Homelessness in 3 European cities

04



Homelessness in 3 European cities

4.1 Barcelona

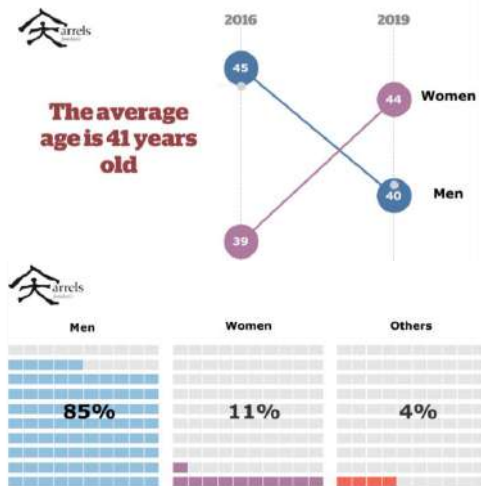


Key data

In **2019** in Barcelona, there are about **3,700 people in a situation of homelessness**, 1,700 more than in 2008. While the population that sleeps on the street on a particular night has increased in the city by 56%, the population served in residential centres, accommodations and flats of the Xarxa d’Atenció a les Persones Sense Llar (XAPSLL, acronym in Catalan for Network of Attention to Homeless People) has grown by 82%.

Between 2008 and 2018, the number of people who sleep on the Street (ETHOSI) in the city has gone from 658 people detected in the first citizen count carried out in March from 2008 to 1,027 quantified in the report of the XAPSLL of the year 2019.

The data on people housed in residential facilities and flats of the Barcelona City Council and the entities that make up the XAPSLL has increased, going from 1,190 people housed per night in 2008 to 2,171 hosted per night in May 2019. Not only does the number of homeless people increases but also the supply and demand of assistance resources for the homeless (de Inés et al. 2019).



Focusing on people sleeping in the street, the proportion of men is a lot higher than that of women. In recent years, women have never accounted for more than 15% of homeless people on the street (Sales, 2019).

Regarding the age of the homeless, men sleeping in the street are younger than ten years ago, and women are older.

Key insights

Root causes - needs/challenges in the field

The growth of homelessness in Barcelona has its own characteristics that must be known in order to design effective policies and interventions:

Age and origin: According to the 2019 homeless count, **17.9% of people without a home in Barcelona are between 18 and 30 years old**. In two years the number of young people without accommodation went from 12.3% to 17.9% in 2019. In fact, the figure doubles between 2016 and 2018, mainly due to the arrival of **young people from North Africa** (Sales, 2019).

5.5% of people staying in XAPSLL equipment are in an **irregular situation**. The irregularity has increased strongly since 2017 when it represented 14.10% of the total number of people accommodated. The largest group, however, is still people born in Spain, which are 36.5% of those hosted. Despite this, the proportion of Spanish people staying has decreased considerably since 2011 and remains stable on the street (Sales, 2019). Part of the increase in people with an irregular situation could correspond with the increase of young migrants alone. Three out of four people sleeping in the streets are not from Spain.

Lack of resources to shelter young homeless: in absolute numbers, the resources of the **XAPSLL house 389 young people who can't access affordable housing**, and 145 young people sleep on the street waiting for a place in an accommodation resource. At the same time, according to the 2019 housing census, there are around 10,000 empty homes in the city of Barcelona and they are not given any use (Barcelona City Council, 2018).

Disability seems to be a high-risk factor to fall into homelessness: people with disabilities who stay in XAPSLL facilities also have increased since 2015. In 2019, 206 people with a disability of more than 64% were housed in facilities of the XAPSLL, and there were 91 with a certificate of between 33% and 64% disability.

Alcoholism, drug addictions and domestic violence are also important causes that could lead to homelessness.

The people experiencing these situations normally have **weak support networks** (family and friends) and enter a very difficult situation where **dignity plays a key role** (difficulty in acknowledging their own situation in front of family and friends).

Current practices and Areas of intervention

Before jumping into areas of intervention, it is important to note the need to **segment** the homeless people by different dimensions such as **chronicity of the situation, gender and nationality**.

We find **two traditional intervention players** that focus on the “**continuum of care**” type of interventions: **City council and NGOs**.

The Barcelona City Council provides services directly to help the homeless, mainly in terms of **temporary housing, employment and mental health support**. The Municipality also acts on the **prevention** side trying to fight against housing exclusion and evictions, as well as, on the detection of vulnerable people risking fall into homelessness.

On the NGO side, there are many organizations, with a large presence of NGOs linked to the Catholic Church, that provides a large portfolio of services: **temporary housing, meals, clothing and hygiene, employment, mental and social network support, etc.**

Among the NGOs, we can highlight **Caritas, Fundació Arrels** (that carries out a one-night census every year) and **Hogar Sí** (acts in the area of social sensibilization and awareness of the problem). These NGOs struggle to raise funding to develop their services. However, there is an increasing awareness of the problem that attracts people to volunteer and support these organizations.

In the area of **innovative and entrepreneurial solutions**, we can highlight:

- **Barcelona Hidden City Tours**⁶: a social enterprise founded in 2013 offering walking tours of Barcelona that exclusively employs and trains up guides who are homeless.
- **Homeless Entrepreneur**⁷: its mission is to promote economic empowerment and poverty reduction via work and active citizenship, so people living in social exclusion can improve their quality of life.

Housing-first interventions seem to be the most effective ones in Barcelona, especially in those people within the first six-month of rough sleep. For this, thinking of **affordable housing solutions** is key (i.e. public-private collaborations). But this needs to be complemented by **emotional support** and the **rebuilding of family and friends networks**.

Also, worth mentioning that the Municipality of Madrid with the funding support of the European Investment Bank will soon launch the first **Social Impact Bond to fight homelessness**. It will be very interesting to keep a look at this innovative experience.

Additional actions to be considered could be:

- **Working on a minimum wage guaranteed to any citizen** (independently of having a permanent address)
- **Helping the young immigrants to obtain a residence permit** and a job. Some programs already exist but require a lot of resources and therefore have a limited reach. Something that could be explored would be to put them in contact with businesses.



6. <http://www.hiddencitytours.com>

7. <https://www.homelessentrepreneur.org/en>

Barriers - why some of the current programmes are not working as intended

Multidimensionality factors of the homelessness: Each homelessness is a synthesis of several causes, effects and needs. In Barcelona, we find different interventions with a focus on different effect factors: mainly housing and employment. However, it seems that there is a **lack of a holistic approach**, and it is linked to the second barrier and third barrier.

Risk of failure on an individual level is very high. Every intervention implies an intensive 1-on-1 (**ultra personalisation**) and long-term work which, in turn, implies a **huge volume of resources**. There are two dimensions of the work with homeless people: on the one hand, building trust with the homeless as they are very wary of helpers (a large amount of time and patience is needed), and, on the other hand, **intervention in the first six-months of rough sleeping seems crucial**. Afterwards, the situation risks becoming chronic.

Helping to overcome a situation of homeless is a long process that involves many different steps and actors: We could explain this process with the Maslow pyramid in mind. First, a person needs to **eat/drink/be healthy**; then to **have a house** (security and stability) and then **find a job and rebuild your networks** to enter society again. The process doesn't end with providing a house. Moreover, the involvement and management of the **emotions in the whole process is key** (if not emotionally stable, a person can't recover).

Going back to the root causes. In Barcelona, around **20% of the population is at risk of poverty and exclusion**⁸. This population matches one or various causes that are identified as a cause of homelessness. Without a holistic approach to vulnerability, it is hard to see homelessness disappear or, at least, reduce it. Another root cause that sets an important barrier to the success of interventions in the case of Barcelona is linked to **immigration laws**. The fact that around 20% of homeless are paperless and the extremely complicated legal and administrative path to overcome this situation, leaves them in a long-term fragility.



8. <https://www.bcn.cat/estadistica/castella/dades/tvida/esd/esd17/persones/taxes/trp.htm>

Efforts of coordination are still lagging behind: There are many organizations providing support, with a focus on homelessness or tackling the different factors around the homeless. There is increasing coordination fostered mainly by The Barcelona City Council. One of the main results of this effort is the **Network of Attention to Homeless People (XAPSLL**, for its acronym in Catalan). However, there is still a **lack of information** exchange which leads to, sometimes, similar service offerings and, in other cases, a lack of traceability of cases. There is also a **mistrust of traditional NGOs and social services towards entrepreneurial and business-oriented solutions.**

Lack of resources and funding. As most of the social challenges, resources and funding never reach all the needs. Main funders are the **Municipality** (directly or through grants to other organizations), the **Regional and National Governments and Foundations** (mainly “la Caixa” Foundation). The 2016–2020 City plan established the investment of €5M for the Municipal Care Programme for Homeless People (Sales, 2017).

In **2020**, due to the COVID-19 crisis, the Municipality announced an extraordinary **€9M budget to face the increase of homelessness and the effects of the pandemic of this vulnerable population.**

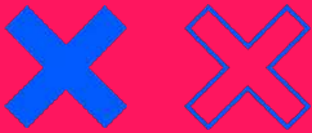


9. <http://www.bcn.cat/barcelonainclusiva/ca/xarxa2.html>

04



Homelessness
in 3 European
cities
4.2 Paris



Key data

Homelessness in Paris is very difficult to measure accurately. There various factors explaining this phenomenon:

- The homeless population is highly difficult to quantify due to a vague and broad definition of the term.
- This population is hard to reach for the authorities and aid organizations.
- Absence of non-universal counting methods and tools, which are specific to each organization.
- Absence of a large-scale data counting system.

Homelessness is still an underestimated problem today, even though we can measure it to a certain extent thanks to the existing data.

Considering the number of shelter places and the number of people on the street¹⁰, we can estimate the number of homeless people in Paris around 35,000 (i.e., 1,6% of the Parisian population).

In 2021, we counted 2785 people living on the streets in Paris¹¹, which represents 8% of the homeless population of the city. This figure is 23% lower than the previous year and could be explained by the opening of reception places in hotels that were empty due to the COVID19 crisis. The majority of them are living on the streets (74%), in spaces managed by institutions (train stations, subways... 14%) and in other areas (woods, gardens, parks... 11%), according to the count made on the Night of the Solidarity ("Nuit de la solidarité" in 2021¹²).



Geographical distribution of the homeless in Paris, Apur/ville de Paris



10. APUR. (2018). Les dispositifs d'hébergement et de logement adapté dans la métropole du Grand Paris.

http://www.drihl.ile-de-france.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/dispositifs_hebergement_et_logement_adapte.pdf

11. Nuit de la solidarité 2021, <https://www.paris.fr/pages/nuit-de-la-solidarite-2021-17285>

12. Ibid



There are multiple and complex reasons why individuals end up on the streets. They can be structural, institutional and individual:

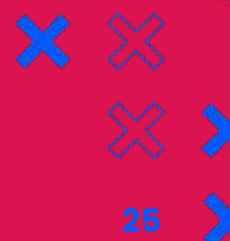
- Structural factors: difficulties in accessing housing (lack of affordable housing), changes in the labour market (job instability, rising unemployment), impoverishment, increased migration, a health crisis.
- Institutional factors: a lack of guidance for people leaving social institutions (Child's support beneficiaries, ex-convicts, psychiatric hospital former prisoners). In France, 1/4 of homeless adults born in the country lived in a foster family or were already known to the child welfare services (Fondation Abbé Pierre, 2019).
- Individual factors: professional and personal breakdowns (family, marital, domestic violence), health problems (mental issues, addictions).

The homeless population in Paris is very heterogeneous from a socio-demographic point of view (Data extracted from INSEE 2012 Study¹³):

<p>A diverse population in terms of age, gender, origin and family background:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationality: a growing share of foreigners (38% in 2001 against 52% in 2012, INSEE) • Gender: 3/5 of the homeless are men. • Age: 74% are between 30 and 50 years old and 25% between 18 and 29 years old. • Format: 65% live alone, 20% in couples and 25% with children.
<p>An unfavourable employment situation leading to a lack of resources:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1/4 of the homeless were employed compared to 53% of the rest of the population. • 47% were unemployed. • 28% were inactive: neither employed, not receiving any social aid from the State and/or not registered as unemployed at the job centre.



13. Homelessness Study, INSEE 2012, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/metadonnees/source/operation/s1268/presentation>



Employability is highly influenced by the durability and stability of housing conditions:

- 5% of the homeless or homeless people housed in a one-night-stay shelter are employed, compared to 45% of those hosted in housing.
- An average of more than 8 months without a home (2011).
- They have only been tenants for not more than 1.5 months in a row due to a lack of resources.
- An average of 2 months in third-party housing or squatting.

Key insights

The detailed information below comes from field studies collected through various discussions with local actors and four formal interviews:

- Gary, a formerly homeless man, who runs a solidarity canteen in Bordeaux and works as a waiter in Paris (5 May 2021)
- Nadir, organises street outreach in Paris for the association Les Enfants du Canal (7 May 2021)
- Eric Constantin, Director of the Ile-de-France regional agency of the Fondation Abbé Pierre (19 May 2021)
- Tania Gadek, Association La Cloche (June 30, 2021)

Root causes - needs/challenges in the field

Our fieldwork and key insights taken from the literature have allowed us to identify the main homeless key needs according to their profile typology. Moreover, **housing** seems to stand out as **the most urgent need** as it impacts their situation as homeless people and **aggravates their subsidiary needs**.

Indeed, the interview conducted with Eric Constantin, Paris Regional Director for the Abbé Pierre Foundation, and the other players interviewed, unanimously highlighted the fact that the homelessness crisis is first and foremost a housing crisis. The strong demographic growth of the Paris region, the rise in real estate prices and the lack of

social housing are putting financial stress on the most disadvantaged populations. Thus, families in search of accessible and affordable housing are obliged to turn to emergency accommodation shelters initially intended for the homeless. As a consequence, accommodation is no longer used for its initial goal (temporary housing solution) which leads to a saturation of this kind of housing solution.

This impression was confirmed by the interview with Gary, a homeless man who underlined the fact that the **inflation of prices**, whether of **real estate or consumer goods**, favours precariousness. This phenomenon ushers the homeless into a **vicious circle from which it is difficult to escape**.

Finally, all the interviewees are unanimous in saying that other issues such as professional integration, health or hygiene would be addressed easier and more effectively if the housing or accommodation problem was less predominant.

That being said, we have identified the 7 main needs of the homeless in response to the issues encountered:

- **Shelter:** Finding a place to sleep is the first need of a homeless person, regardless of their profile. The lack of access to housing leads to a cascade of exclusion and reinforces all the other difficulties encountered in the life of a homeless person.
- **Protection:** The streets are a hostile environment for the homeless, even more so for women and children who are generally more exposed to violence. Thefts, assaults, kidnappings, rapes...homeless people must deal with multiple safety challenges every day.
- **Care:** The homeless often have complicated health issues and need medical and psychological care. On the one hand, it is difficult to identify the cause and effect relationship between mental pathologies and exclusion (does they appear before or after the exclusion?). On the other hand, physical pathologies are largely a consequence of life as a homeless person (more exposure to violence, insalubrity, poor nutrition, drugs...)
- **Information:** Most homeless people are not informed enough about their rights. Indeed, many homeless people, once in the streets, do not know where to go to find places for shelter or support or even how to ask for financial aid from the State.

- **Social Link:** Homeless people have a strong social rupture. The main reason why homeless people have difficulties to get out of their condition is their lack of close networks (friends, families, acquaintances...), something that could be very helpful in their situation.
- **Integration:** they feel the need to participate and be part of the community.
- **Administrative situation:** People rejected for asylum cannot access social shelter and housing, which increases the pressure in emergency shelters and makes their situation even more precarious.

Current practices and Areas of intervention

Several public and associative measures currently exist to address this complex problem.

a. Social Monitoring

Social monitoring consists in identifying homeless people in the streets, informing them of their fundamental rights and redirecting them to the first reception centres. Some of the main Social Monitoring organizations are Samu Social, Emmaus Solidarités or Les Restaurants du Coeur.

- **Street outreach:** A Street Outreach consists in sending a team of people travelling around town, day and night (in a van, with bicycles...). With them: hot drinks, blankets and medical equipment. The aim of the marauding is to identify and help homeless people.
- **Daytime shelters:** A daytime shelter is a friendly, local place that provides unconditional shelter during the day to anyone who is excluded, wandering or in a very precarious situation.
- **SIAO (French Public Reception and Orientation Services):** The role of the SIAO is to process accommodation requests from homeless people and organize the whole process for allocating places. This institution aims at respecting continuity and unconditional reception of this population. Regulation and coordination are key elements to ensure the success of the whole process. In Paris, the SIAO is managed by Le Samu Social.

b. Sheltering: The accommodation and inclusion sector

The objective of these solutions is to provide shelter to vulnerable people and offer them social support to help them find stable housing. They are also led by the principle of unconditional reception. They are financed by the State but directly implemented by associations. In Paris, there were 11,000 accommodation places at the end of 2019¹⁴ (Some of the main Shelter Organizations are Aurore, La Mie de Pain, Le Refuge, Samu Social, Emmaüs Solidarité,...).

There are 3 types of shelters:

- **The CHU (Emergency Accommodation Centres):** provide immediate, unconditional, anonymous and free reception. This is temporary accommodation and the stay can last as long as a permanent solution is not found. The people housed receive help in accessing their rights and in finding accommodation or a suitable integration structure.
- **The CHUS (Emergency and Stabilisation Accommodation Centres):** are places where the people housed can work on a project for integration. They are open 24 hours a day. The funding is not permanent. People are referred to by the outreach services, the association's reception centres or by the network of partners. Social support is provided.
- **The CHRS (Accommodation and Social Reinsertion Centres):** are categories of social establishments involved in the reception, accommodation and social and professional reintegration of people in situations of exclusion: isolated, in couples or in families. Admission is made after referral by the SIAO, via an interview and the signing of a contract of stay.

c. Other measures and smaller key players.

There are further existing public and/or private solutions to the needs of the homeless previously listed. They allow for instance to respond to the need for hygiene by providing showers, or exclusively address the issue of safety for homeless women, etc...



14. According to DRIHL, Regional and Interdepartmental Directorate of Housing, Study

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Historically in France, it was the voluntary sector that first tackled the problem of homelessness. It was only later that the State intervened to coordinate and steer initiatives on the subject. Nowadays, the fight against homelessness is mainly organized around the State, which sets up and coordinates accommodation and housing policies for the homeless. The policy then moves down to the regional and then local levels to implement the decisions taken. They carry out the initiatives at a more local level with the policies in place and in coordination with the associations. For example, in Paris, the city has set up a system "Louez solidaire et sans risque" that allows people living in shelters to access housing in the private sector with a rental/sub-rental contract managed by an association. At the national level, in this logic since 2018, the French State has been deploying the "Logement d'abord" (Housing first) plan, which promotes unconditional access and support towards housing.

Barriers - why some of the current programmes are not working as intended

The interviews conducted have helped us identify some of the reasons why the existing solutions for homelessness are failing to address the issue.

An overbooked/saturated National system

Like Europe, France is facing major economic crises leading to an increase in precariousness, rising unemployment, price inflation and employment difficulties. All these factors increase the number of people falling into homelessness and prevent them from getting out of their delicate situation. As a consequence, the associations must deal with a more precarious population and for which it is more and more difficult to find working and social stability.

Not enough synergies developed between the multiple existing players

Many actors in the social and solidarity economy have taken up the issue to respond to this major problem. Thus, a large number of solutions at the local, national and international levels have emerged.

However, due to the fragmentation of the sector, these actors often work separately and it is difficult for them to generate synergies to build more effective solutions. This synergistic difficulty is explained by the fact that today there are two typologies of actors by size:

- Large actors on a national/international scale who have the capacity to have macroscopic impacts
- Very small and fragmented actors at the ultra-local level, making small volumes of impact but very often having good results thanks to the proximity of their actions

There are few if any actors of intermediate size who can bridge these two worlds of homelessness. One way of thinking about this would be to look at the State's ability to help actors to structure themselves more.

A quantitative approach

Indeed, today the State is allocating ever-higher budgets to alleviate the problem, but it too is only growing. This can be explained in different ways:

- An increasingly high cost of living especially with property prices soaring throughout Paris;
- An unbalanced government housing strategy with social housing stock far below the need, creating a cascade of saturation on available places;
- Support and practices that are sometimes unsuitable for getting the public concerned out of their difficult situation, because of the lack of connection between housing and shelter actors.

It also seems important to us to underline a paradoxical point for all the actors of the social and solidarity economy (in the field of homelessness but not only): if we push the reasoning to the extreme, they are working towards their own disappearance. Indeed, if, for example, the actors of homelessness managed to solve the problem, they would no longer have a reason to exist. Unfortunately, there is very little chance that this will happen, but if so, or at least if the problem decreases, it would be interesting to see how the actors decide to adapt their strategy (end of their activities, reallocation of their resources to tackle other problems,..)

Homelessness in 3 European cities

X 04.2 Paris

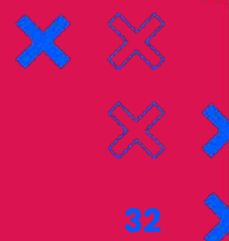


Nevertheless, we can also ask ourselves what the situation would be like if these actors did not exist. If they are struggling to reverse the trend of homelessness, their actions have a considerable impact that the state can no longer support.

These same actors must, therefore:

- Find an effective response model to the problem
- Create synergies
- Keep lobbying the government to take efficient actions

These points having been identified by the government through consultation with the actors in the field, the government launched the Housing First plan which will end in 2022 and of which we will make an assessment.



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Key insights

Homelessness in numbers with focusing on Ghent and Belgium

In 2016 there were 18 700 rough sleepers in a nationwide count (Bircan et al, 2018). In 2020, a coordinated count for the city of Ghent put the number at 1873¹⁵ on a given night. The living situation of these individuals is documented as follows (Herman et al, 2021):

Ethos* Light category	Adults 1472	%	Of which Men %	Of which Women %	Children 401	%
1 – public space	124	8,4	87,1	12,9	7	1,7
2 – emergency shelter	113	7,7	82,3	16,8	6	1,5
3 – homeless shelter	169	11,5	53,3	46,7	120	29,9
4 - an institution	136	9,2	72,1	27,2	6	1,5
5 – non-conventional living space (garage, tent,...)	264	17,9	68,6	31,1	82	20,4
6 – With family and friends	565	38,4	68,0	31,7	128	31,9
+ Under threat of eviction	76	5,2	72,4	26,3	48	12,0



15. <https://stad.gent/nl/samenleven-welzijn-gezondheid/nieuws-evenementen/alle-dak-en-thuislozen-gent-geteld-om-beleid-op-maat-uit-te-rollen>

1. **Gender:** Generally we expected more men than women to be homeless. The SILC-EU study showed a gender division of 61% men and 39% women. For Ghent, the numbers were more along the lines of 70,7% male, 28,9% female and 0,4% others.
2. **Age distribution:** Of the respondents, 26,8 % were adults between the ages of 30-39 this is the largest group.
 - 23,2% aged between 40-49
 - 17% aged between 18-25
 - 13,9% aged between 50-59
 - 10% aged between 25-29
 - 5% aged between 60-69
 - 1,9% aged >70

At the time of the count, there were 401 children directly impacted by their parents' lack of accommodation.

3. **Nationality:** Of the homeless people 45,5% had Belgian nationality and 41,4% of them were born in Belgium. The legal status of 57,3% of homeless people was in question and 12,4% were granted temporary papers allowing them to remain in the country.
4. **Socio-economic situation:** A significant number of the homeless people questioned (47,6%) reported having some form of (replacement) income. This can refer to a replacement income provided by social services, pension or unemployment benefits. 25,5% of the respondents did not have any form of income and 12,9% had some form of informal income. About 8,8% received payment from gainful employment though these wages were insufficient to provide them with a steady household income.
5. **Health:** Only 32,7% of the homeless people questioned at the last count did not have any health issues. This means that the majority of them do suffer from various illnesses. The largest group being 28,9% with mental health issues, another 25,6% had addiction issues. 19,6% of the total group reported having been institutionalised. This includes mental health clinics, addiction centres and prisons (12,3%) but also youth institutions (7,9%).

Only 4,6% reported a physical disability and 6,6% reported a mental/developmental disability. With regards to chronic health issues, 18,6 % responded in the affirmative.

Key insights

Root causes - needs/challenges in the field

According to the MEHOBEL table 1 (Demaerschalk et al, 2018), root causes can be summarised as structural, institutional, relationship-related and personal. The following table goes further into what we can understand as root causes affecting who and why becomes vulnerable to becoming homeless:

Structural

- Economic process: effect on income stability of employment
- Immigration/citizenship: discriminations/access to social protection
- Housing market processes: access to social or affordable housing

Institutional

- Available mainstream services: shortage of services that meet care needs
- Allocation mechanisms: spatial concentration of people in need
- Lack of coordination between coordinating mechanisms: admissions and discharge procedures

Relationship

- Family status: single people are more vulnerable
- Relationship status: abusive partners/parents
- Relationship breakdown: divorce/death/separation

Personal

- Disability/long term illness: (mental) health/learning disabilities
- Low education level: low attainment
- Addiction: Alcohol/drugs/ gambling
- Age: Young/Old/female
- Immigration status: Refugee status/recent arrival

 04.3 Ghent**Systemic causes**

Poverty: 47,8% of homeless people in Ghent receive social assistance in the form of a living wage, a replacement income or a pension. With 15% of the Belgian population at risk for poverty.

Personal and structural causes: Serious psychological issues are hindering reintegration. 19,6% of homeless people face impediments re-entering the housing market as much as an institutional past, which is the case for 12,3% (prison system) and another 7,9% with a history in youth systems.

Lack of affordable housing: inadequate access to social housing is still posing a huge problem even though housing is among the most important factors towards reintegration. Furthermore, the housing prices are not in balance with the average wages. As a result, 38,1% of people who pay market prices for their rentals have to spend 40% of their wages to do so.

Precarious working conditions: 8,8% of homeless people get an income from employment though these are often short term, uncertain contracts. With regards to undocumented labour, about 12,9% cite this as a source of income.

Current practices and Areas of intervention¹⁶

Bed, bath, bread: A “bed, bath and bread” symptomatic approach that created a network of organisations providing for different basic needs on top of a recent European influence shift towards a ‘Housing first’ policy. A cleanliness plan was provided along with a [mind map](#) that contained a list of organisations homeless people could get help from, i.e. places they can freshen up and bathe or simply use the lavatory. There are night shelters and experiments on temporary housing going on throughout the city.



16. <https://www.socialsecurity.be/citizen/nl/hulp-ocmw/hulp-bij-huisvesting/daklozen>

Homelessness in 3 European cities

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Hygiene: The city of Ghent set up a map of places where homeless people can use the restroom, shower and wash their clothes either for free or for a low cost. This was named the '[was-en-plasplan](#)'. The map can be seen on the website of the city.

Public sanitation

-  toilet
-  toilet for disabled people
-  changing table
-  ladies room
-  men's room or urinal



There are some options for **free and low-cost meals** (social restaurants, distribution points for supermarket leftovers or community cooking such as De rode Lotus or Solidariteitsfonds Gent) as well as free access points on a website dedicated for those who are either homeless or face the risk of becoming one.¹⁷

Housing First Policy: These traditional areas of intervention are being elaborated upon through a housing-first approach which prioritises getting people into a sustainable housing situation. This includes providing ways to register and apply for a living wage and attempts from policymakers to shorten the list towards social housing. The latter through innovative projects such as the Vesalius building where an old university building was adapted into temporary housing for homeless people, 80% of which went on to find stable living situations of their own¹⁸. A one-time premium is given to homeless people that can help secure their living situation once they have found a rental on the private market¹⁹.



17. http://www.socialekaartvangent.be/schema/wonen/ik_ben_dakloos

18. Project Vesalius:

<https://www.groengent.be/het-vesaliusproject-eeen-extra-en-tijdelijk-huisvestingsinitiatief-voor-vluchtelingen-en-daklozen>

19. <https://www.wonenvlaanderen.be/premies/de-vlaamse-huursubsidie-voor-wie-verhuist-naar-eeen-geschikte-huurwoning-0>

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Areas of intervention

These suggestions and recommendations stem from interviews with frontline workers and policymakers on the theme (City of Ghent's Housing Department, De Tinten and Odisee Hogeschool). We have organised them according to the level at which they are applicable, the nano to micro-scale is a proposed division for social issues put forward by the doughnut economics actions lab in Brussels²⁰.

Macro: on a regional level

Getting to know all the actors, our ecosystem mapping can serve as a clear first step in understanding the issue and moving forward by strengthening and cooperating with existing initiatives. Understanding the issue on a local policy level makes clear what the logical first steps may be. A concrete example is looking at case studies of failed projects in social housing and improving on those.

Meso: Public policy strategies

At this level the interaction between policy and advocacy becomes more clear. By taking a look at potential policy interventions and the role certain engaged administrative services can play we gain a better perspective on how to leverage social and entrepreneurial initiatives toward actual impact. For the city of Ghent, this would mean contacting the administrative workers supporting the ROOF initiative who are trying to line up policies for different European cities²¹. But it would also involve asking questions from an entrepreneurial perspective regarding for instance co-housing and social housing regulations to examine what's possible.

Micro: What is already possible

The local initiatives like the social renting offices or businesses that have already integrated the issue in their business plan. This can indicate which initiatives have market potential and a positive impact. On a micro level, the main question is: 'which further steps can be undertaken'.



20. Downscaling the Donut at 4 levels in Brussels:

<https://doughnuteconomics.org/stories/83>

21. <https://urbact.eu/roof>

Nano: Look at the origins

At nano level we look at the individual origins of a particular problem to help identify potential solutions. One interviewee suggested that future business owners might benefit from a short personal stint as a volunteer regarding their chosen topic as the fastest way to get some hands-on insight into the potential in the field. Another interviewee pointed out that taking into account people's need for autonomy or distrust for vested structures.

Barriers - why some of the current programmes are not working as intended

Success factors for implementing programmes addressing homelessness are regular follow-ups as well as systemic programmes implemented in more steps, in collaboration with relevant actors (housing, job agency, mental health support) with built-in follow-up. However, there are risks associated with implementing such programmes which amount to barriers to overcome. Below you will find some of these barriers²².

1. **Not providing a long-term solution, only temporary relief:** well-intentioned programmes can provide a short term solution, however, without systemic and long-term follow-up measures, they will only alleviate the problem temporarily.
2. **Not reaching the target group** while planning and implementing policies and programmes to address homelessness, it is vitally important to create an alliance of actors who can reach the target group on the ground.
3. **Not enough prevention steps avoiding homelessness:** in many cases, current measures and policies offer symptomatic solutions addressing the current situation and do not have the resources or capacity to invest in holistic prevention programmes.



22. **Impact Shakers** interviews (2021)

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4. **Not reaching/helping the 'dark number' within youth homelessness:** homelessness is a difficult and complex phenomenon with scattered and unreliable data about who is exactly affected or experiencing it. There are many young people and children who are invisible to the statistics and can be hard to reach.
5. **Lack of communication with agencies in the field:** one of the main risks our research has revealed is the lack of coordinated communication between stakeholders working on different aspects of the problem.

05



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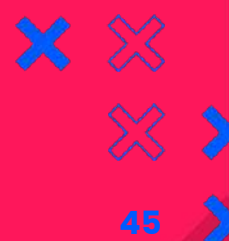


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EXPAND - A Challenge-based Idea Accelerator and Toolbox

EXPAND is a 3-year European project funded under Erasmus+ Knowledge Alliances uniting 8 partners from Europe. The main goal of EXPAND is to develop a 4-month idea accelerator program for future entrepreneurs tackling systemic problems in society. After embedding all the learnings of the first Idea Accelerator, the project will disseminate a practical toolbox with the best practices to replicate the accelerator in other universities or institutions.

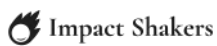
The toolbox will be available to teaching staff worldwide and it will include a viable, replicable and scalable methodology for implementing a challenge-based idea accelerator.

Through its pilot year, the first Expand Idea Accelerator will focus on addressing the challenge of homelessness.

Website: <https://expandaccelerator.eu/>

EXPAND

A Challenge-based Idea Accelerator & Toolbox



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