

**Internal EU migration
and its impact
on homelessness**

**The study was written by the
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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The aim of this briefing paper is to examine issues relating to *"Internal EU migration and its impact on homelessness"*. In particular, the objectives are to provide an overview of the impact of EU internal migration on the management of homelessness by local authorities in the context of the EU enlargement process that took place in May 2004 and January 2007. The paper includes possible recommendations for further action at European, national, local and regional level in this area.

The briefing paper was prepared using a number of primary and secondary resources, among them a small interview programme with key stakeholders including the Barka Foundation (UK), Crosscare (Ireland), Glasgow Homeless Partnership (Scotland) and the Commissioner on Homelessness for France. Initial discussions also took place at European level with the European Federation of National Organisations Working on Homelessness (FEANTSA), who provided additional information materials.

1.2 EU policy and the legal context

The **free movement of workers** is one of the four fundamental freedoms guaranteed by Article 45 of the amended EC Treaty. The free movement pillar provides workers with the right to free movement and residence, the right of entry and residence for family members, the right to work in another EU Member State, and the right to equal treatment in respect of access to employment and working conditions. While the right to free movement has led to some economic and employment benefits, it has also had a negative impact. Following EU enlargement, the migration of people with a disadvantaged background from the new, less well-off Member States to more prosperous EU countries has led to a significant increase in the number of homeless people.

While the Community does not have specific powers to tackle homelessness, the EU policy framework is supportive of efforts to promote social inclusion and prevent exclusion. For example, the ratification of the Lisbon Strategy in December

2009 included the entry into force of the **Charter of Fundamental Rights**, which has helped to reinforce the EU's social inclusion agenda. Article 34(3) of the Charter states that *'In order to combat social exclusion and poverty, the Union recognises and respects the right to social and housing assistance to ensure a decent existence for all those who lack sufficient resources, in accordance with the rules laid down by Community law and national laws and practices'*.

The Charter's successful implementation will depend on appropriate policy measures being taken at national level by the Member States to provide homeless people within their own borders with assistance in securing access to adequate housing. However, the Charter does not include an obligation for Member States to provide housing. There is a concern that the EU-12 Member States lack the necessary resources and regulatory frameworks to address homelessness. Furthermore, some countries face significant challenges in developing appropriate policy responses that involve joined-up solutions between different government agencies to housing shortages.

A wide range of issues related to poverty and social exclusion have been addressed through the **Open Method of Coordination (OMC) on Social Protection and Social Inclusion**, which provides a mechanism for cooperation and joint working between the Commission, Member State governments and the social partners. Homelessness and housing exclusion was given particular priority in 2009.

There has also been an emphasis through the OMC on **developing common definitions and indicators for homelessness**, drawing on the work carried out by FEANTSA (the main European NGO working on homelessness issues). The aim has been to improve social inclusion policies related to homelessness and housing exclusion through a number of projects, campaigns, studies and meetings that have involved the European Commission, the Member States, representatives from national parliaments and local and regional authorities (LRAs).¹ One of the main outcomes of cooperation through the OMC has been the development of a common definition for homelessness by FEANTSA, referred to as the ETHOS typology, and the uptake by some Member States of the typology. The ETHOS typology sets out a conceptual structure that can be used by national, local and regional authorities to

¹Hult T. ECOS-V-001: An Analysis Note for an Own-initiative Opinion on Combating Homelessness. Brussels: Committee of the Regions. p, 3

map out the scale of homelessness and develop a better monitoring and evaluating framework for assessing the implementation of social inclusion policies relating to combating homelessness.

In the Communication on the **European Social Agenda 2005-2010** - '*Renewed Social Agenda: Opportunities, access and solidarity in 21st century Europe*'², one of the priority areas is combating poverty and social exclusion. Although there is no specific reference to homelessness, the document recalls the importance of the EU's Structural Funds, the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund and the PROGRESS Programme 2007-2013 on employment and social solidarity to promote social inclusion. Furthermore, the EU has designated 2010 as the *European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion*. Policy recommendations on homelessness will be included in the *2010 Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion* which could be used as the political basis for an ambitious EU strategy on homelessness.³

With regard to the **EU legislative framework, there is no legal basis in the EC Treaty for taking action on housing**. The Committee of the Regions (CoR) has taken the view that, under the subsidiarity principle, the EU should be doing more to improve access to housing in the Member States, particularly as various studies and evaluations for the Commission have found that migrants and ethnic minorities, including the Roma, are at a disadvantage when trying to access quality and affordable housing.

The Race Equality Directive from 2000 (EC Directive 2000/43) provides legal protection from discrimination in access to services, including housing, on the grounds of race or ethnic origin. In the context of EU internal migration this is particularly important as regards disadvantaged groups such as the Roma. While there is some evidence that this directive has had a positive impact in terms of providing a framework within which housing discrimination can be addressed, in practice direct and indirect discrimination in housing (including discrimination by

² COM(2005) 33 final

³ FEANTSA. Europe will not deliver for people living in extreme poverty: FEANTSA's comments on the future EU 2020 strategy.

http://www.feantsa.org/files/freshstart/EU_Docs/Social_Inclusion/2010/100115_EU2020_consultation_feantsa_N.pdf. 30/03/2010

EU migrants) remains prevalent in the absence of effective structures for monitoring and reporting.

While there has not been much EU financial support specifically for housing in the past, since EU enlargement there is a growing recognition that housing is a significant problem, particularly in the new Member States for groups such as the Sinti and Roma. Some of these problems have spilled over into the old Member States.

In order to address problems linked to the lack of access to housing, in 2005, housing was made part of EU cohesion policy and became **eligible for Structural Funds support during the period 2007-2013**. However, this would be limited to EU-12 countries, although funding would be provided until 2013 for urban renewal projects in all Member States. On 13 July 2006 the European Commission published a communication on Cohesion Policy and Cities.⁴ Housing forms an integral part of this communication, in which the Commission lists a number of measures that are eligible in line with the convergence, competitiveness and employment objectives.

1.3 Baseline assessment

1.3.1 Migratory developments linked to EU enlargement

The EU has experienced a steep rise in internal migration since 2004, due mainly to the accession of 12 new Member States. A key factor behind such increased internal migration flows is the persistent inequality between social and economic conditions in the EU-12 and the former EU-15 countries, a problem that EU cohesion policy seeks to address through instruments such as the Structural Funds. Current trends suggest that by 2020 up to 3 million EU-12 citizens will reside in the former EU-15⁵. In some Western European countries the level of migration from EU-12 countries has been remarkably high. For example, in the UK over 600,000

⁴ Delebarre M. Key elements of an effective strategy to combat exclusion in the area of housing: How can Europe help local and regional authorities to combat exclusion in the area of housing more effectively? Brussels: Committee of the Regions

⁵ Barysch K. Enlargement Two Years On: Economic Success or Political Failure? Centre for European Reform: Denmark. 2006 p 5

Polish immigrants arrived during the period 2004-2009. Of these, 78% were aged between 18 and 34.⁶

The social and economic situation in many of the EU-12 countries has led to significant emigration from areas with low economic growth to more prosperous areas of the EU. It is estimated that 2.7 million⁷ families in Central and Eastern Europe face shortages in housing due to reduced legal protection coupled with increases in purchasing and maintenance costs. Countries such as Romania have experienced rising poverty levels combined with acute shortages in affordable housing. The EU's commitment to the free movement of people and goods has also led to an increase in the levels of homeless migrants from EU-12 countries in Western European countries.

Research carried out prior to 2004 by the European Observatory on Homelessness of FEANTSA⁸ indicates that the recent (and rapid) rise in new wave immigration (asylum seekers and Eastern European immigration) has created new problems for providers of services for the homeless in the EU and suggests that this is likely to become a permanent phenomenon. It is important to highlight that although annual asylum applications to the EU have stabilised at around 192,000 from a 1992 peak of 670,000⁹, Europe is also a popular destination for undocumented migrants from non-EU countries, whose impact on homelessness figures is difficult to estimate. OECD data suggests that Europe is the destination for 85% of migratory movements from North Africa¹⁰.

1.3.2 Impact on homelessness of internal EU migration

The following analysis provides a limited picture of the situation on homelessness within the EU since many EU members have no official or coordinated sources of data collection on homelessness, particularly within EU12 countries. It is therefore difficult to assess precisely the impact on homelessness of EU migration.

⁶ UK Border Agency. Accession Monitoring Report 2009.

http://ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/reports/accession_monitoring_report/. 2009

⁷ FEANTSA. Homelessness in the New Member States. <http://www.feantsa.org/code/en/pg.asp?Page=35>. 2008

⁸ FEANTSA – the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless

⁹ Eurostat. Population and Social Conditions: Asylum Applications in the European Union.

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-07-110/EN/KS-SF-07-110-EN.PDF. 2007

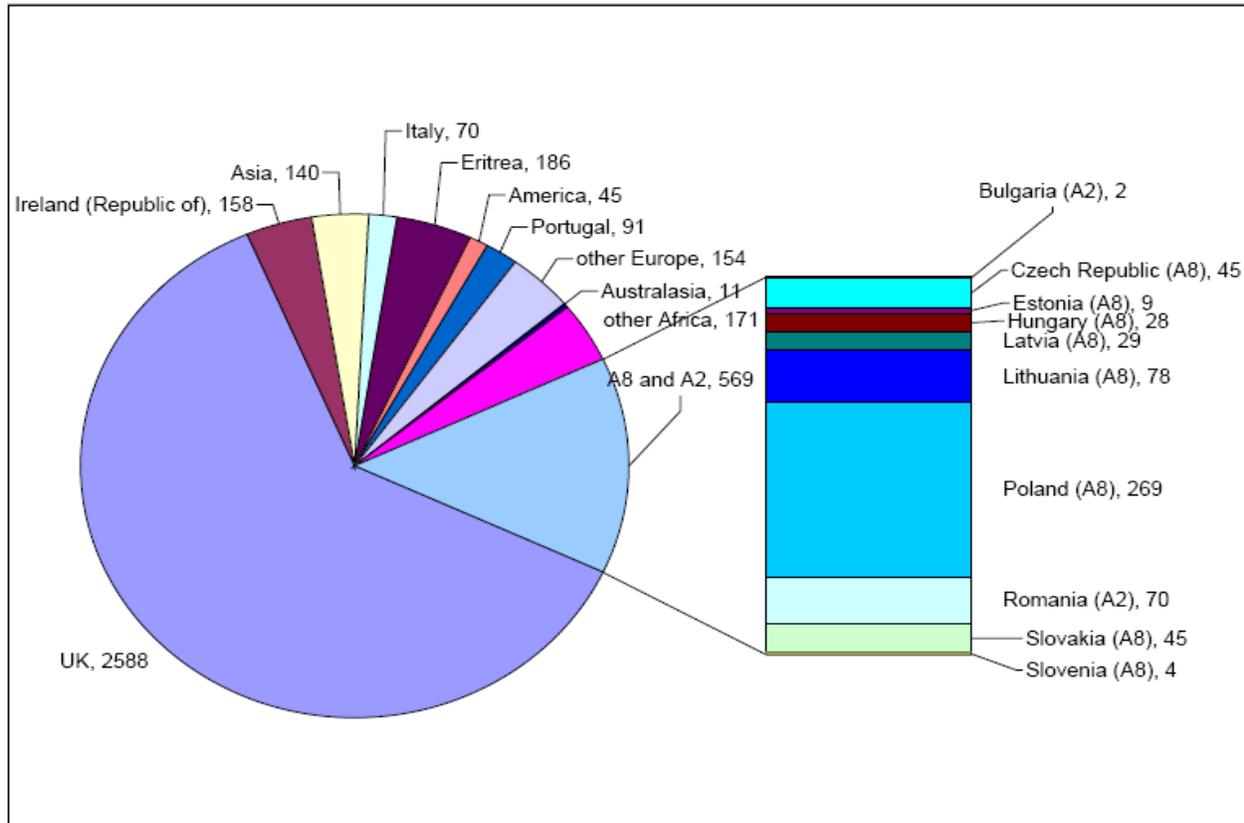
¹⁰ OECD. International Migration Outlook 2008. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/30/13/41275373.pdf>. 2008

There are several reasons for the lack of accurate data on homelessness at national level. These include the federal structure of government in some countries, where responsibility for data collection is spread among different regions, the structure of welfare systems in the EU as well as disparities between Member States' definitions of homelessness. Practical limitations also exist in many Member States where there is no pre-existing methodology for monitoring homeless numbers.

The Member States have employed three approaches to data collection, including the use of survey methods to count the homeless, register-based approaches and the use of census and related official surveys. These methods are used to carry out surveys of homeless people, collate information from service providers and administrative records, as well as carry out surveys of the general population. Many of the Member States have adopted the ETHOS typology of homelessness to streamline national data collection strategies and develop comprehensive policies for combating poverty. The ETHOS typology was developed by FEANTSA to provide a common definition and categorisation of homelessness.

Only a limited number of countries, such as France, Ireland and the UK, maintain national statistical data and carry out baseline assessments of homelessness. The task of collecting data is mainly performed by NGOs and local councils, often working through outreach teams. In the UK there are a number of voluntary groups and charities that monitor trends in homelessness, such as nationality, gender, ethnicity and support needs. The CHAIN database provides the most comprehensive data on homelessness, sleeping rough and the street population in Greater London, with information received from over 80 projects. The 2008-2009 annual report for London shows the number of people entering and leaving shelter accommodation by nationality:

Figure 1: People contacted by outreach and/or entering or leaving accommodation in the year by nationality



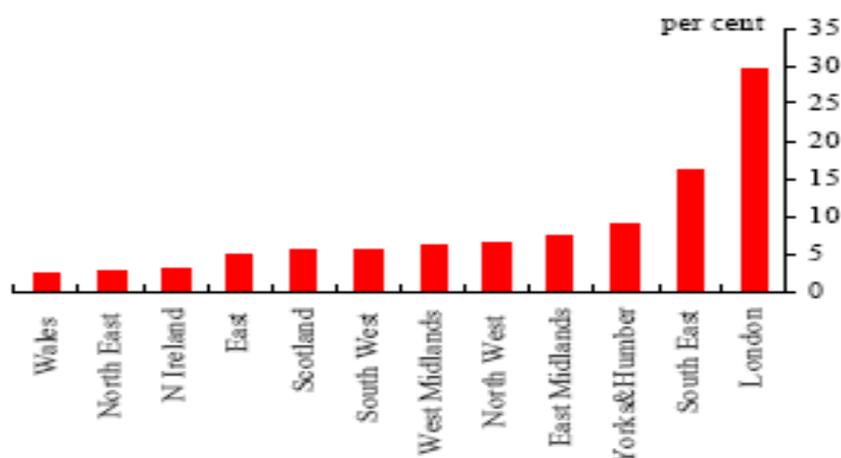
Source: CHAIN Database ¹¹

The database shows a steady rise in the proportion of homeless migrants from Central and Eastern Europe residing in London, with an overall percentage increase as a proportion of total UK homelessness from 6% in 2005 to over 14% in 2009. This reflects the wider trend of net immigration to the UK from EU-12 countries, a significant share of which is concentrated in London and the South-East of England. According to a study carried out by the Bank of England¹², there have only been 128 local authority lettings to EU-12 immigrants in England. However, there is evidence, particularly in London, that homeless EU-12 migrants have become a significant burden for local authorities.

¹¹ CHAIN. Street to Home: Annual Report for London. <http://www.broadwaylondon.org/CHAIN>. 2009

¹² Blanchflower D, Saleheen J, Shadforth, C. The Impact of the Recent Migration from Eastern Europe on the UK Economy. Bank of England. <http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/speeches/2007/speech297.pdf>. 2007

Figure 2: The share of new immigrants in each region of the UK (2006)



Source: Bank of England

There has also been a rise in the proportion of homeless migrants who are first time visitors to London. For 2008/2009 this figure stood at 58% overall, and at 77% for migrants from EU-12 countries. Further survey information collected by the Homeless Link project identified the main countries of origin for homeless migrants in London. The figures show large numbers of homeless migrants from Poland (69%), followed by Lithuania (9%), the Czech Republic (7%) and Hungary (6%). CHAIN data also confirms that the majority of Central and Eastern European rough sleepers were recent Polish migrants (51%), followed by Lithuanians (14%) and Czechs (11%).¹³ The proportion of homeless EU-12 nationals is consistent with the number of migrants registered on the Workers Registration Scheme.

Similar patterns of homelessness among migrants from within the EU have been identified in Paris, where over half of the 2000 single homeless people counted in 2006 in the city's parks, gardens and on ring road embankments were migrants from Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Poland, Ukraine, Romania). Furthermore, the Paris Council's department of health and social affairs counted over 300 extremely marginalised Polish nationals living on the streets in 2006.¹⁴

¹³Homeless Link. Central and Eastern European Rough Sleepers in London: Baseline Survey.

http://ec.europa.eu/citizens_agenda/social_reality_stocktaking/contributions/docs/contrib91-2.pdf. 2008

¹⁴Horréard J. FEANTSA, Social and Demographic Change and Homelessness: Migration and homelessness in Paris. <http://www.feantsa.org/code/en/pg.asp?Page=35>. 2007

Dublin is another magnet city where the influx of migrants has forced local and regional authorities to address the increase in levels of homelessness among recent migrant groups from the new EU Member States. There is growing concern about the increasing numbers of non-Irish nationals accessing homeless services, including emergency accommodation and food services. This led the Homeless Agency to carry out a survey in order to estimate the use of homeless services by migrants. The survey data found that the majority of respondents were Polish (65%), with significant numbers from Lithuania (10%) and the Czech Republic (9%).¹⁵

The Scottish Council for Single Homelessness (SCSH) reported that during 2004-05 Scotland received 833 homelessness applications from A8 (accession 8) nationals; this represented 1.7% of all Scottish homelessness applications. The city of Edinburgh also found that 627 A8 nationals were accessing day/night services between May 2004 and December 2006. A study in Lanarkshire reported that 1.1% of homeless applications were non-UK residents. In the Glasgow study, out of 262 interviews, 55% of migrants had previously experienced homelessness.¹⁶

1.3.3 Profile of homeless migrants

While statistics are not widely available on the characteristics of homeless people with an EU migrant background, discussions with local authorities suggest that migrant men from the new Member States are more adversely affected by homelessness in EU-15 countries than women. This is for a variety of reasons, including difficulties in accessing the labour market among the low-skilled, alcohol and substance abuse and higher levels of mental health problems.

Data from the Worker Registration Scheme on the overall profile of migrants entering the UK shows a male-to-female ratio of 9:1 among contacts made in homelessness services. Overall it was estimated that migrants from EU countries make up 10% of Dublin's homeless population followed by 5.7% originating from non-EU countries. The Irish Homeless Agency also found that single people

¹⁵Homeless Agency. Counted In: A report on the extent of homelessness in Dublin.
<http://www.homelessagency.ie/>. 2008

¹⁶COSLA. Impact Of Migration On Key Local Government Services
www.cosla.gov.uk/attachments/execgroups/cw/cw080416item08.doc. 2003

represented 67% of households experiencing homelessness while people with dependents made up 30%.¹⁷

Men accounted for 83% of Dublin's homeless, compared with 87% in London. The average age of homeless people was 26-29 years in Dublin, and 36-45 in London. In recent statistical surveys approximately 40% of the homeless had an EU migrant background. While comprehensive data is not available, interviews with homelessness charities suggest that the overwhelming majority of homeless migrants are young, single males.

In recent years the risk of homelessness has expanded to include different types of households. The causes can be structural, institutional, relational and personal. According to the Barka Foundation a large number of homeless migrants originate from the former Soviet Republics and often have difficulty adapting to the social and economic situation in the former EU-15 countries. Migrants from EU-12 countries often become homeless after failing to obtain work because of job shortages in the construction, catering and agriculture sectors. Some 10% of homeless Polish migrants have previous experience of homelessness in Poland. They are often unprepared in terms of financial resources, higher education and language skills, and so they can become victims of illegal employment as well as involvement in gangs and organised crime.

1.3.4 Causes of homelessness among EU internal migrants

Homeless migrants often require support services for a variety of mental, physical, legal and emotional problems. Homeless Link has identified some of the most common needs and conditions that affect the lives of homeless migrants from Central and Eastern Europe. In general, homeless EU-12 nationals consider finding employment to be their greatest problem (60%), followed by a lack of translators (45%), a lack of knowledge about social protection entitlements (25%), and racism (9%).¹⁸

A previous paper for the Committee of the Regions¹⁹ underlined some of the most common causes of homelessness. These included: a lack of access to social housing

¹⁷ Homeless Agency. 2008

¹⁸ Homeless Link. A8 Nationals in London's homelessness services. <http://www.homelessdirect.org.uk/>. 2006

¹⁹ Committee of the Regions Analysis note: Opinion on Combating Homelessness Rapporteur: Mr Tore Hult (se/pse)

and the absence of affordable housing, particularly in big cities, low pay, substance abuse and the lack of essential services, mental illness, domestic violence, unemployment, poverty, release from prison and the problem of re-entry into society, as well as changes and cuts in public assistance. Lack of access to housing is a complex issue, and particularly affects certain categories migrants. The Roma are particularly disadvantaged.

Although the majority of new wave migrants are better informed than their predecessors, cultural factors are often a barrier to the integration of migrants from a Roma background, who are significantly less aware of their rights and have less knowledge of where to access services. According to the Scottish government such people have different service needs from the rest of the EU-12 population and are likely to need greater support from service providers in the short to medium-term.²⁰

A European Commission study²¹ in 2004 found that *‘people from ethnic minority and immigrant communities are at greater risk of exclusion from the housing market. They experience this exclusion in relation to discrimination in the allocation of housing, the consumption of poorer quality housing and the high cost of housing relative to their income’*. While the study mainly focused on ethnic minorities as well as migrants from non-EU countries, access to housing continues to be a problem for internal EU migrants, and there is evidence that there are different rules for non-nationals and some sub-groups from Central and Eastern European countries facing particular difficulties, such as the Roma.

Access to housing for foreign nationals, including EU migrants, can be problematic. For example, in the UK, a House of Commons research paper on EU migrants: Entitlement to Housing Assistance (England) notes that under the 1996 Housing Act: *‘the rules on eligibility for housing assistance in relation to persons from abroad are extremely complex. There is no general entitlement to social housing for anyone in England, including British citizens. Even those people from abroad who may be eligible for housing assistance still have to qualify for*

²⁰ Blake Stevenson. A8 Nationals in Glasgow: Glasgow City Council. Edinburgh: Blake Stevenson. 2007

²¹ Policy measures to ensure access to decent housing for migrants and ethnic minorities, European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

assistance²² in line with an authority's housing allocation scheme, or meet the criteria under which a statutory duty arises to households that are homeless'.

The difficulties experienced by some migrants from the new Member States when trying find meaningful work is clearly a causal factor in the new wave of homelessness. However, the CHAIN database lists other support needs within the homeless community, such as alcohol abuse (49%), drug abuse (40%), and mental health issues (35%).²³ Data was also obtained on the institutional history of homeless people in London, 39% of whom had experience of prison, 12% had been in care homes and 5% were former members of the armed forces.²⁴

Overall, the analysis indicates that the recent rise in the rate of homelessness in the former EU-15 countries shows a direct correlation between EU expansion, the free movement of people within the EU and the removal of restrictions on migration from EU-12 members. People from Central and Eastern Europe account for a significant proportion in the rise of net homeless migrants within the EU as well as an increasing proportion of the homeless populations in large Western European cities such as Dublin, London and Paris.

²² Even in instances where an EU migrant is eligible for housing, they must also be unintentionally homeless and fall into a priority need category, as defined in section 167 of the 1996 Act, before they can qualify for assistance.

²³ CHAIN, 2009

²⁴ CHAIN, 2009

2. Local and regional dimension of homelessness

2.1 National policies to tackle homelessness at local level

National government has an important role to play in setting the national policy framework for tackling homelessness. National authorities in many EU countries are also responsible for ensuring that appropriate resources are made available to local and regional authorities.

National policy approaches to homelessness differ between Member States. There are various references in the *National Strategy Reports on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2008-2010* to policy measures to combat homelessness. In addition, some of the national reports developed as part of the *2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion* include references to the extent to which homelessness has been prioritised.

A number of countries have also developed *national homelessness strategies*, although this is not the case in all EU Member States. These include a commitment to either reduce or wholly eradicate homelessness through a range of preventive measures, such as providing support for vulnerable people, tackling the wider causes of homelessness, assisting rough sleepers directly and moving the homeless out of temporary into more settled accommodation. These various policy documents set the context in which local and regional authorities plan and manage homelessness, including measures to deal with the specific problems and challenges associated with the increasing numbers of internal EU migrants who have become homeless.

National homelessness strategies typically outline the level of government funding for homeless services of LRAs. Figures vary depending on the scale of homelessness in each country. For example, the UK has allocated £200 million²⁵ for the next three years to support local authority and voluntary sector

²⁵Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes; Changing lives: A Strategy for Tackling Homelessness. www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/sustainablecommunitiessettled2. 2005

homelessness prevention schemes, whereas Denmark has earmarked €64 million²⁶ for the implementation of its homelessness strategy in eight municipalities. Under Finnish plans to halve homelessness by 2011, the government is targeting local authority housing advisory services with €80 million.

While this funding is targeted at the homeless generally, those with an EU migrant background who have become homeless will directly benefit from this funding. The UK, for example, has seen a significant influx of migrants from the new Member States since EU accession (due to the fact that, along with Ireland and Sweden, it was among the first three EU countries²⁷ to fully open up its labour market).

In the context of the single market, while in principle people with an EU migrant background have the same rights as nationals in accessing social welfare and housing and - should they become homeless - homelessness services, in practice there is evidence of differentiated treatment.

For example, in Denmark, in homeless shelters, priority is given to Danish nationals over homeless migrants from within the EU. This is attributed to limited capacity in homeless shelters, but clearly contravenes equal treatment principles. The economic crisis, and rising unemployment, has meant that Danish society has become increasingly hostile to migrants. *'Shelters for the homeless risk losing their subsidies if they provide even emergency services to homeless Eastern Europeans. For the 600 Eastern Europeans who are currently homeless in Denmark, there is no recourse to food or a bed at any homeless shelters'*²⁸.

2.2 LRAs and homelessness

In this sub-section, we examine the main challenges for homeless services at local and regional level posed by the increased levels of homelessness in some EU countries that have resulted from internal migration within the EU.

²⁶Danish Ministry of Interior and Social Affairs. A Strategy to Reduce Homelessness in Denmark 2009-2012. <http://www.feantsa.org/code/en/pg.asp?Page=1169>. 2009

²⁷ The right to free movement of workers from, to and between the EU countries that joined the EU on 1 May 2004 (Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia) and on 1 January 2007 (Bulgaria, Romania) has been restricted in some EU countries during the transitional period of a maximum of seven years after accession.

²⁸ http://www.feantsa.org/code/EN/pg.asp?Page=24&pk_id_news=2877, 2009

2.2.1 The role of LRAs in homeless service provision

While national authorities set the policy and legislative framework on homelessness, combating homelessness is predominantly a local issue. In most EU countries, local authorities (often working together with NGOs and sometimes also with private sector providers) are responsible for the provision of housing and services for the homeless. They also have some responsibility for promoting social integration, working in conjunction with other public service providers including public employment services, education and training institutions, health services, etc.

The higher level of homelessness among internal EU migrants from Central and Eastern European countries has implications for local and regional authorities in Western Europe, including a need for additional resources to pay for the increased level of demand for homelessness services and in respect of the provision of emergency shelter and temporary accommodation for the homeless.

One of the traditional roles played by LRAs is to provide housing for citizens unable to access housing. However, these institutions are already under pressure to develop policies and implement measures to address social exclusion problems experienced by more established migrants and ethnic minority communities (including those of the second and third generation). These include difficulties in accessing the labour market and affordable housing.

Among other responsibilities, LRAs perform a regulatory function in respect of ensuring access to social housing. Demand for social housing is partly driven by the legacy of past urban planning and the increase in property prices that has characterised many Western EU countries. Hence, the complexities of housing supply, demand, entitlement and need pose both short and longer-term challenges for homeless services within the EU.

Sheltered accommodation is subsidised at the local level by LRAs in many EU countries, such as Austria, Finland, Italy, Poland, Hungary, Spain, the Czech Republic and the UK. In other countries, such as France and Luxembourg, national government is responsible for the distribution of public subsidies to providers of services for the homeless. A small number of EU members, Ireland in particular,

operate funding arrangements whereby government ministries, individual health boards and local authorities cooperate with voluntary providers to assess funding needs.

In instances where the public sector plays a less active role in addressing social inclusion issues, including access to housing, cooperation between local councils and NGOs essentially consists of coordinating access to sheltered accommodation by exchanging information about the level of demand from homeless people. Examples in this regard include Ireland, Portugal, the Czech Republic and the UK.

In Greece, there is little public sector service provision of financing support. Instead, some homeless shelters are paid for using European Structural Funds (ERDF) resources. The public authorities in Greece refer homeless people to NGOs which may assist homeless EU migrants with their re-housing needs. The important role played by NGOs is also evident in Austria, where in many towns the public and private sectors work together to facilitate the integration of homeless people into social or council housing.²⁹

2.2.2 Key issues – barriers in access to housing and social welfare benefits among EU migrants

In this sub-section, we examine the barriers facing EU migrants when trying to access housing, homeless services and social welfare benefits, including questions related to official registration schemes for migrants. It is important to understand these barriers when examining the implications for local and regional authorities. Broadly speaking, there are three main types of barriers facing migrants accessing housing and social welfare support. These include:

- Structural barriers – e.g. rules governing eligibility for registration schemes for migrants and the prohibitive upfront registration costs for some migrants in applying for these;
- Legal barriers – e.g. restricting the duration of stay of EEA nationals;

²⁹ Eurostat. The Production of Data on Homelessness and Housing Deprivation in the European Union: Survey and Proposals. http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-CC-04-008/EN/KS-CC-04-008-EN.PDF. 2004

- Social and cultural barriers – e.g. the tendency of some Roma to prefer living in a large community environment.

For various social and economic reasons, people with a recent migrant background from within the EU are considered to be vulnerable to homelessness and are more likely to be subject to discrimination when accessing housing. Although there is a relatively low level of recorded discrimination against migrants seeking access to housing in the EU, there is evidence that discrimination can arise even in countries where regulatory structures have been put in place to prevent discrimination.

Discrimination in access to housing can be either direct or indirect and may occur at a structural, institutional or individual level. As the housing market becomes more market-driven, housing organisations tend to operate in favour of individuals and organisations according to their occupational and economic status. This has been to the detriment of homeless migrants, particularly the Roma, who are also vulnerable to racial discrimination.³⁰

Many organisations dealing with homelessness refer to a ‘hierarchy of vulnerability’ with regard to migrants’ access to housing, with the position of migrants within the hierarchy largely determined by their legal status (insecurity of migrant status, limited access to social services for non-citizens), economic barriers (poverty, lack of access to social welfare), and cultural barriers (lack of support networks and access to formal support structures).

Legal barriers for migrants in accessing affordable housing vary among the EU Member States, although it is common for national registration programmes to link access to employment with access to social welfare and housing. For example, under EU law European Economic Area (EEA) nationals do not require permission to enter or remain in the UK. However, the right to reside in the UK depends on the individual circumstances of migrants, particularly their economic status (e.g. whether or not they are workers, self-employed, students, or economically inactive).

Since 2006, the UK has tightened regulations on migrants' eligibility to access social housing with the aim of limiting homelessness assistance to ordinary

³⁰ Edgar J. Policy Measures to Ensure Access to Decent Housing for Migrants and Ethnic Minorities. Joint Centre for Scottish Housing Research: University of Dundee and University of St Andrews. 2004. p 18

residents of the UK, i.e. those habitually resident, and to EEA nationals exercising Treaty rights.³¹ Furthermore, EEA nationals may be excluded from housing assistance if they are unable to prove habitual residence in the Common Travel Area (CTA), if residency status is derived from their status as a job seeker and whether or not they are categorised under Regulation 13 of the EEA regulations (limiting the period of residency to three months).³²

A key barrier that migrants face in accessing housing - and a major cause of hidden homelessness - is the failure of migrants from EU-12 countries to officially register under national residency programmes, such as the UK's Worker Registration Scheme (WRS). Home Office records show that from 2004-2009 there were 1,373,535 applications under the WRS scheme, 66% of which were made by Poles (this does not include the numbers who are not required to, or choose not to register with the scheme). Records also state that 3 out of 4 applications for benefits from this group were unsuccessful. In the same period, nearly two-thirds of applications made by A8 migrants for statutory homelessness assistance were rejected by local authorities.³³

According to the Dublin-based homelessness organisation Crosscare, reductions in the funding available for social housing has affected the capacity of local authorities to support migrant registration applications in Ireland. This has meant that migrants are often forced to support themselves financially while their case is being processed, during which time there is a greater chance that they may become homeless.

2.2.3 Measuring the scale of homelessness among EU migrants at local level

There are difficulties in assessing the level of homelessness at local and regional level due to the absence of rigorous local, regional and national monitoring systems in many EU countries.

There is a particular problem in measuring the extent of homelessness among EU migrants due to the absence of data collected by local authorities. Consequently,

³¹ Luba and Davies, *Housing Allocation and Homelessness Law and Practice*, 2006. Chapter 10.77

³² Wilson W. *EU migrants: entitlement to housing assistance (England)*. UK: House of Commons. 2010. p 2

³³ Sadowska E. *Home Office Statistics for Worker Registration Scheme*. UK: Barka Social Economy Centre. p 1

local authorities and homeless service providers are not always aware of the scale and impact that mass EU migration has had on the number of homeless people or of their specific needs.

A key problem is that service providers, homeless shelters and national methods of data collection only measure age, gender and social needs, rather than differentiating between the numbers and needs of native and foreign homeless people.³⁴ Local authorities often delegate responsibility for carrying out surveys on the scale of homelessness to NGOs and charities for the homeless. These service providers tend to play a more active role in measuring homelessness in countries where the policy agenda includes homelessness as a high priority (e.g. the Czech Republic, Poland) or in countries where NGOs create umbrella organisations to fill a gap in public policy intervention (e.g. Austria, Greece).

Different methods for measuring homelessness are used by the Member States depending on the extent of funding support from local authorities. In Austria, for example, social workers and researchers operating through the BAWO umbrella organisation have conducted surveys in Vienna, Linz and Graz since the mid-1990s.³⁵ The Greek homeless organisation Klimaka has also commissioned a survey as part of the process of creating a forum of NGOs to deal with homelessness. Although there has been an increase in the implementation of survey programmes within the Member States, because of methodological weaknesses these have not allowed governments to effectively monitor trends in the level of homeless EU migrants.

Measuring and effectively monitoring Europe's migrant homeless is complicated by the unknown numbers of hidden homeless who either fail to register for social housing or choose not to for legal or cultural reasons. For example, people living with family or friends are often hidden from normal statistical survey methods, and so their presence is not always registered by local authorities. Some UK cities, such as Glasgow, are experiencing significant financial, administrative and crime-related

³⁴ COM. Constructing Understandings of Homeless Populations.
<http://cordis.europa.eu/documents/documentlibrary/100124281EN6.pdf>. 2007, p 31

³⁵ COM. Measurement of Homelessness at European Union Level. Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG. 2007. p 38

costs associated with an influx of unregistered migrants who fail to exercise their Treaty rights³⁶ and impose costs on local authorities' emergency services.

2.2.4 The response of homeless service providers to homelessness among internal EU migrants

In this sub-section, we examine the response of LRAs and other homeless service providers to the challenges posed by the increased levels of homelessness among EU migrants since EU enlargement. The extent to which LRAs have adopted a differentiated approach in addressing the needs of homeless EU migrants is explored, and a number of good practices are highlighted. Examples of the way in which LRAs have responded to the specific needs of vulnerable groups - including the Roma - are provided.

The increase in the number of homeless people with an EU migrant background has had a number of implications for homeless service providers, including increased demand on resources, organisational issues (operational procedures, staffing and training) and, increasingly, planning issues.³⁷ There is evidence from the OECD that economic and social deprivation is increasing in many European cities with high levels of unemployment and homelessness.³⁸

Generally speaking, LRAs have not responded to the increased numbers of homeless migrants by tailoring their activities sufficiently for EU-12 nationals. Addressing the specific needs of the homeless from the new Member States implies additional resourcing, for example, to fund the cost of interpretation and service provision in different languages. Many homelessness services provided by LRAs already face resource constraints linked to the additional demand placed on them by the increased numbers of homeless migrants.

Other factors include the pace of change in migratory trends and their impact on homelessness, a lack of data about the scale of the problem, and a lack of research about what types of strategies, policy measures and initiatives would be most

³⁶ EEA nationals who are not exercising EC Treaty rights to reside, and their family members, will not acquire a right

of UK residence under the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2006 (SI 2006/1003)

³⁷ Edgar E, Doherty J, Meert H. Immigration and Homelessness in Europe. UK: University of Bristol. 2004. p 162

³⁸ Martiniello M. Towards a coherent approach to immigrant integration policy(ies) in the European Union. OECD. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/42/58/38295165.pdf>. 2006. p 12

effective in tackling homelessness among recent EU migrants. A further reason is that homeless services often target groups and develop services based on the age and gender of the recipients of homeless services. In many EU countries, there is a lack of emphasis on funding language training and integration services, which could play an important role in tackling migrant homelessness.

However, there are exceptions. LRAs in several EU countries have funded programmes targeting homeless migrants from EU-12 countries. For example, some LRAs have provided homeless support services and access to health and psychological counselling in different languages. Others have used community-based outreach work as a tool for strengthening knowledge and understanding about the needs of homeless EU migrants.

During the desk research phase, we reviewed a number of homelessness projects for EU-12 migrants supported by LRAs in EU-15 Member States. Since homeless EU-12 migrants are disproportionately concentrated in the capital cities of a small number of EU-15 countries, the examples are taken from those EU countries that have been particularly affected by internal EU migration since EU enlargement in 2004, such as France, Ireland and the UK.

Some LRAs, especially those faced with high numbers of homeless migrants from EU-12 countries, such as local authorities in London, have supported initiatives to encourage the repatriation of homeless migrants.³⁹ A number of London borough councils have received funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for reconnection schemes. These involve cooperation between LRAs and homeless service providers in the new Member States and reconnect migrants with their country of origin.

Funding for such projects is often provided by national government to local authorities, charities and private service providers as part of the response to the high levels of homelessness among migrants residing in confined urban areas. Reconnection projects can provide feedback that helps to enhance cooperation

³⁹ Department for Communities and Local Government. Guidelines for Operating Reconnection's Policies for Rough Sleepers: Outline Framework.
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/gettingconnected?view=Standard>. 2006. p 5

between LRAs and service providers, thus promoting good practice and improving homelessness management strategies.

Although most local authorities provide reconnection services across the UK, the largest number of public and private reconnection services is located in central London, where the funding allocations for local councils include £100,000 for Westminster and £100,000 for Hammersmith and Fulham councils for the period 2008-2010. Several private homeless services have received funding from local authorities to implement a range of reconnection schemes, including Thames Reach (£60,000)⁴⁰ and the Barka Foundation UK (£80,000 per year since 2007). Barka UK demonstrates the ways in which cooperation between local authorities and an international service provider can generate spill-over effects in terms of leveraging new sources of funding for social integration projects.

Reconnection projects: encouraging homeless EU migrants in big cities to return home

The London boroughs of Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham have experienced a sharp increase in the numbers of Polish migrants seeking housing and employment. There has been a corresponding increase in the number of Polish rough sleepers, which has prompted concerns regarding the number of street drinkers and the welfare of this group.⁴¹ In response, 11 London boroughs invited the Poland-based Barka foundation to establish Barka UK in order to operate a culturally-specific reconnection service. The project is implemented in five key London boroughs and provides additional assistance such as translators, administrative staff and access to legal advice.

On average, it takes one to two months to convince a single migrant to return home. The process often involves providing additional support from Barka homeless specialists based in Poland to facilitate the move and funds for London staff members so that they can accompany migrants on their journey. So far, 1,100 homeless migrants have participated in the project. Barka UK demonstrates how transnational cooperation between local authorities and internal EU service providers can encourage homeless EU-12 migrants to return to their countries of origin. This has the effect of alleviating the pressure on the

⁴⁰ Thames Reach. Reconnection Project for Eastern European Rough Sleepers.
<http://www.thamesreach.org.uk/news-and-views/reconnection-project-for-eastern-european-rough-sleepers/>.
2009

⁴¹ Shelter. Good Practice Report, New Directions: Supporting Street Homeless People with Complex Needs. Vol 2.
London: Shelter. 2008. p 11

UK's services for the homeless.

Building on the activities of Barka UK's reconnection service, the organisation has initiated a pilot project for the social integration of Eastern European nationals in the labour market through its Social Economy Centre in London. The centre will operate in partnership with the charity Providence Row from April 2010 for a period of three years with initial funding of £350,000 (co-financed 50% by UK central government and 50% by the Corporation of the City of London, the London borough of Tower Hamlets and the Oak Foundation.

The services offered by the centres will include preparation for employment, employment support services, personal document support, legal and financial advice, and drug and alcohol addiction support. In addition, Barka representatives have addressed the Scottish Parliament and Irish local authorities who have expressed an interest in replicating the organisation's reconnection programme in major cities such as Dublin, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Further examples of good practice can be identified in respect of both homeless shelter provision and initiatives designed to reduce overall homelessness levels. Some of the most interesting examples are outlined below:

The Rough Sleepers Unit: reducing homelessness and joint working with NGOs to target homeless people with a migrant background

The Rough Sleepers Unit (which now operates under the Department for Communities and Local Government) has been instrumental in reducing the numbers of rough sleepers in the UK. Despite contrasting estimates, in 2005 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister reported that annual rough sleeping figures for 2005 showed a 75 per cent reduction since 1998 (from 1,850 to 459) in the number of people sleeping rough in England.⁴² Since the unit was set up, 10,000 rough sleepers have been assisted and provided with access to housing and emergency homeless services. The unit has also significantly reduced the number of families with children in temporary housing such as bed and breakfast hotels.

The unit is staffed by civil servants from various departments who are seconded from governmental organisations with strong links and access to high-level policymakers. Furthermore, the unit has produced an innovative methodological framework with clear quantitative and time-specific objectives for reducing the number of rough sleepers. The first phase of reductions was achieved with an allocated budget of £200 million, which has been matched by a further £200

⁴² Wilson W. Rough Sleepers. <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/briefings/snsp-02007.pdf>. 2010

million in government funding to end rough sleeping by 2012. Outside London the unit operates through local authorities, but in the capital it implements joint activities with NGOs, particularly those targeting homeless people with a migrant background.

Additional examples of good practice have been identified in countries such as Finland and Denmark, where a national target has been set to close and replace all general homeless shelters with better tailored solutions that meet the needs of individual homeless people, such as single housing, collective housing and related care (medical, psychological or drug abuse related). However, in Denmark, migrants (especially those from non-EU countries and illegal migrants) have sometimes been unable to access homeless services, with preferential and differentiated treatment evident even between EU migrants and Danish nationals.

A key reason why many LRAs and national authorities have failed to implement appropriate measures to combat homelessness in EU-15 countries is the lack of awareness among decision-makers and within society as a whole about the full extent of the problem. This lack of awareness can have a negative influence on the provision of homeless services by LRAs, who often have to translate national homelessness strategies into local priorities and practical measures. Some NGOs and SMEs operating in EU-15 countries have tried to implement awareness-raising initiatives through local cooperation, such as in the following example in Austria.

**Awareness-raising Initiative in Austria: “Obdachloses Europa in Wien”
(Homeless Europe in Vienna)**

In late 2009, an initiative entitled “Obdachloses Europa in Wien” (Homeless Europe in Vienna) was launched to raise awareness about the situation of homeless EU migrants in the Austrian capital. This followed a series of student protests at Vienna’s universities in November 2009. Homeless people had joined the protest and camped with the students in the university building. After being evicted, they were sent to the homeless services of the city. However, since the majority of the people were Eastern EU migrants who were unemployed and had been resident for less than five years in the country, the city of Vienna had no legal obligation to provide support for them.

The initiative has been supported by a local Green party councillor, the Viennese emergency shelter VinziBett, through the provision of tents, sleeping pads and sleeping bags, as well as Caritas, through the provision of medical equipment.

Caritas in Vienna estimates that there are around 300 Eastern European homeless people who are not receiving social support from city authorities. At the start of the initiative, around 65 of these people were placed under the care of a Caritas service funded through donations. The initiators of “Obdachloses Europa in Wien” argue that the City of Vienna's interpretation of EU social security regulations is too restrictive and are lobbying various government institutions for a European response to the problem of homelessness.

In some large cities experiencing a significant wave of homelessness among EU migrants since EU enlargement in 2004, the private sector has played an important role in developing innovative measures to address shortages in quality shelter accommodation. The example below highlights the potential for private companies, working in conjunction with local NGOs, to plan and implement homelessness projects and address broader social issues. This can be particularly effective when dealing with gaps in the provision of public services that are due to a combination of factors, including lack of expertise and resources and, in some cases, a lack of political will. The involvement of private entities can be particularly effective when combined with close collaboration with NGOs and charity providers.

Sleeping Bus For Homeless People (Milan, Italy)

In 2002 the public transport operator (ATM) committed itself to providing a support service to address the vulnerability of homeless people to winter temperatures in Milan. The project was established as a response to the rising number of homeless people sleeping rough at night because of the shortage of shelters. In recent years, there has also been an increase in the number of Eastern European migrants sleeping on the streets of Milan. A local public transport company ATM has created the ‘Good Samaritan sleeping bus’, which consists of an 18-seat front section, providing hot meals and medical assistance from Fondazione San Francesco and a doctor from the Doctors of the World Association, and a second section containing 16 beds and a hygiene zone. In addition, the bus provides clothing and psychological help to homeless people.

The project was jointly implemented by ATM and Fondazione Fratelli and succeeded in its first three years, 2002-2005, in helping 8,000 homeless people to receive social and medical assistance and obtain a secure sleeping environment. Overall, 60 volunteers were involved in the project annually, some of whom received social awards. One of the ways in which the project adds value is through its ability to reach particular sub-groups of Milan's homeless community, including EU migrants, for whom there is currently a general lack of

emergency sheltered accommodation and available medical treatment.

As discussed in section 1.3.3, the failure to obtain employment is a key cause of homelessness among EU-12 migrants, which has led some local authorities to support innovative ideas to help the homeless access the labour market. In order to begin the process of training and homeless people and equipping them with new skills, the next project has used a variety of soft tools, such as therapy, combined with robust guidelines to help homeless migrants overcome low levels of self esteem by adopting a practical work ethic and a positive attitude toward the benefits of social integration. The added value of such projects is that they give homeless migrants an opportunity to develop stable relationships with host country participants, which may lead to spill-over benefits in terms of language learning and an improved chance of success in entering the labour market. In cases where migrants possess previous education or skills, these projects can also highlight effective ways in which such pre-existing qualifications might be marketed to employers.

New Style Occupation Projects - Netherlands

Local authorities in the Netherlands have developed a range of measures to tackle homelessness, particularly among migrants from EU-12 countries. These measures include providing access to education and training, volunteer work, a meaningful occupation, day jobs, and both paid and supported employment. One measure is an attempt to engage homeless people through the provision of safe working environments (New Style Occupation Projects) where work schemes can be integrated with multiple support processes in the field of housing and care. The project has demonstrated a strong capacity for re-introducing homeless people into the labour market, which is particularly important for migrants from EU-12 countries.

In Amsterdam the project Church and Neighbourhood employs a number of homeless migrants in a furniture recycling centre, which also includes sub-projects providing food, clothing and music therapy. The benefits from this type of activity are clear to the participants, who often show a positive response to what they consider to be meaningful employment rather than a purely profit-based motivation. These types of project are also an effective way of encouraging social networking while enjoying the mutual support of project staff.

New Style Occupation Projects have been replicated in a number of other Dutch

cities such as Helmond, where homeless people have been encouraged to work in a botanical garden, growing vegetables and producing jam. Key skills were also developed in a 'social' restaurant, bicycle centre and arts and crafts workshop. However, most of the cities which have organised New Occupation Projects to maximise the choice of occupations for homeless people are opposed to seeking regular or sheltered employment for participants.

Following EU enlargement in 2004, the new Member States have largely relied on funds such as the European Social Fund (ESF) and EQUAL to support local, regional and national initiatives to tackle homelessness. In Poland, major NGOs and service providers dealing with homelessness have successfully applied for EQUAL funding. These include partnerships such as Agenda of Homelessness, Back on Track, Social Economy in Practice, and the Campaign Against Poverty. Participation in EQUAL is felt to have been useful in developing the capacity of services for the homeless in Poland, including the re-integration of Polish migrants who have become homeless in EU-15 countries.⁴³

Some EU migrant groups who are particularly vulnerable, such as the Roma, are faced with extra challenges when accessing housing and homelessness services provided by LRAs. The influx of large numbers of migrants with a Roma background from EU-12 Member States, such as Slovakia and Romania, to EU-15 countries has placed additional pressures on local authorities, who have to deal with the extra demand for emergency housing and health services, issues concerning child education and protection, and migrants' lack of the language skills required to enter education and the labour market. The average Roma household contains 5-6 people, with a high ratio of children to elderly persons.⁴⁴

The quality of housing for migrant groups such as the Roma has been raised as a key issue by local authorities. For example, in the Govanhill area of Glasgow the Slovakian Roma population, which is about 2,000 in number, is concentrated in poor quality private rental property. These people suffer from low wages, high levels of unemployment and low levels of worker registration in the UK government's official registration scheme. As a result, the Roma experience

⁴³ Wagnanska J. The Impact of Structural Funding on Service Provision for the Homeless (EQUAL and Poland). FEANTSA: European Journal of Homelessness. 2008. p 3

⁴⁴ Policy Department. The Social Situation of the Roma and their Improved Access to the Labour Market in the EU. European Parliament: Economic and Scientific Policy Department. 2006. p 47

disproportionately high rents, sub-standard living conditions and overcrowding.⁴⁵ The Glasgow Homeless Partnership has also highlighted the fact that Slovakian Roma living in overcrowded housing often identify themselves as family members and so are not categorised as inhabiting Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), which means that landlords can avoid additional licensing regulations.

The ‘Villages d’insertion’ (Insertion villages) project France – promoting more sustainable housing solutions through Roma integration

A project currently being implemented by local authorities in France specifically targets Roma migrants who are living in temporary accommodation and poor quality housing (including the hidden homeless). The aim of the ‘Villages d’insertion’ (Insertion villages) project is to promote the welfare and integration of Roma migrants from the new Member States and enable them to integrate into French society and the labour market, and thereby find more sustainable housing solutions (as many of them are currently living in temporary accommodation). The villages - in Aubervilliers, Saint-Ouen, Bagnolet, and Saint-Denis - also provide education and employment centres.

2.2.5 Internal EU migration and its impact on homelessness in the future

Since the Amsterdam Treaty of 1997, which incorporated the Schengen Agreement into European law, EU internal passport controls have been removed in all Member States except the UK and Ireland. However, upon EU enlargement only **Ireland, Sweden and the UK agreed to the immediate removal of employment restrictions for foreign workers.** There has been a significant migration of workers and job-seekers from the new Member States to EU-15 countries as a result of EU enlargement and the progressive implementation of freedom of movement.

As a consequence of increased migration, homeless service providers in former EU-15 countries (particularly Ireland and the UK) have experienced significantly greater pressures on existing resources due to the increase in homeless migrants.

⁴⁵ Pool L, Adamson, K. Report on the Situation of the Roma Community in Govanhill, Glasgow. University of the West of Scotland: Oxfam. 2009. p 9

Conversely, EU-12 countries have not experienced any major changes in the level of homelessness as a result of increased internal EU migration.

The nature of migration flows within the EU means that the **scale of homelessness and the ability of particular countries to tackle the problem of homelessness linked to internal EU migration vary among the Member States**. For example, in EU-15 countries services for the homeless are reasonably well established at local and regional level, where a residual amount of sheltered accommodation is made available to nationals. The main challenge faced by LRAs in EU-15 countries with regard to homelessness is considered to be the slow pace at which the relevant authorities have adapted to large inflows of EU migrants. In contrast, in EU-12 countries there are weaknesses in the provision of homelessness services and in ensuring access to social and health services, and a lack of non-profit and charitable organisations with the resources and capacity necessary to cater for the homeless and rough sleepers.

In the UK, the **implications of recent migration for social housing provision are of major concern to LRAs and providers of services for the homeless**. Local authorities in Belfast, Slough and Westminster have highlighted challenges such as fire safety and overcrowding in homes occupied by EU-12 nationals as well as the indirect effect of competition on housing rental prices.⁴⁶ Local councils in Hammersmith and Fulham have recorded a rise in the number of EU-12 rough sleepers. Migrants from EU-12 countries are seen as a burden on publicly funded hostels and day care centres. In order to meet increasing demand for sheltered accommodation, housing benefits and local subsidies have been used as the main source of funding. This has meant diverting resources from the rest of the community to meet the needs of homeless people in particular areas. Currently, migrants from EU-12 countries do not have a right to social housing in the UK until they have been employed for one year, so many EU-12 nationals who are without a home are not formally classified as homeless.

The number of people recognised as homeless is expected to increase over time as EU-12 migrants progressively gain rights and full access to social housing. Several EU countries, such as Denmark, currently deny non-citizens access to

⁴⁶ House of Lords. Select Committee on Economic Affairs: The Economic Impact of Immigration. Vol 1. London: Stationary Office. p 49

services for the homeless because of the restrictive nature of funding regimes and legislative rules. Service providers who assist such groups may face prosecution or have funding withdrawn, leaving migrants to rely on low threshold emergency services as integration support and social housing are not available to them. Where local authorities have denied services to homeless migrants it is often service providers such as NGOs and charities that provide reintegration support for homeless people. **The lack of language skills is one of the key drivers of homelessness among internal EU migrants** as well as placing greater pressure on service providers. Language proficiency is also considered to be a prerequisite for educational attainment and gaining sustainable employment.

The removal of restrictions on Bulgarian, Romania and Turkish citizens could have a considerable impact on overall levels of homelessness in EU-15 countries, given that these countries already have large numbers of homeless people and high unemployment rates. At the time of joining the EU in 2007, Romania and Bulgaria's GDPs per capita were 41% and 38% of the EU average respectively.⁴⁷ The number of people experiencing homelessness in Turkey and the A2 countries far exceeds the capacity for sheltering them. For example, in Sofia there are only 3 temporary shelter services for a population of 1-2 million and at present there is no known social and housing policy that targets homeless people.⁴⁸

Since 2006 many of the EU's largest economies have imposed work permit systems on migrants from Romania and Bulgaria as a means of influencing the economic push and pull towards the EU-15 countries' labour markets. However, these measures have not prevented a **large number of Bulgarian and Romanian Roma families from relocating to Western Europe**. These people often lack the linguistic skills and financial means for integration into the host society.

Because of the relatively low levels of social and economic development in many "new" Member States there is little evidence that the trend of mass immigration from EU-12 countries to the "old" Member States is likely to slow significantly in the short to medium term. The expected future **removal of work restrictions on citizens from Romania and Bulgaria** is likely to place additional demands on

⁴⁷ Pollard N, et al. Floodgates or turnstiles? Post-EU Enlargement Migration Flows to (and from) the UK. UK: Institute for Public Policy Research. 2008. p 41

⁴⁸ Dandolova I. National report on homelessness in Bulgaria: 2007. Brussels: FEANTSA. 2007. p 2

LRA services for the homeless, especially in urban areas such as the cities of Dublin, London, Glasgow and Paris.

3. Conclusions and policy recommendations

3.1 Conclusions

Since the wave of EU enlargement that began in May 2004, homelessness among internal migrants within the EU has increased significantly. While the number of people that have become homeless from the new Member States since moving to Western European countries is small as a proportion of total migrants, it is a growing problem.

Some homeless shelters report that as many as 20% of people who have become homeless and require temporary accommodation have an internal EU migrant background. Cities such as Dublin, London and Paris have experienced a significant rise in homelessness linked to increased levels of internal migration.

The countries most affected by homelessness include France, Ireland and the UK. Spain has also been particularly affected since the onset of the financial crisis, which has led to a significant rise in unemployment.

The most prominent causes of homelessness among internal migrants include difficulties in accessing the labour market and problems due to the absence of affordable housing (especially in major urban conurbations). There are also other factors, including mental health problems, alcoholism and substance abuse and, in the case of women, domestic violence.

The global economic crisis has exacerbated the problem of homelessness among internal migrants because migrants have been disproportionately affected by unemployment. There have been job lay-offs in sectors that have traditionally been major employers of migrants from the new Member States, including construction, catering and agriculture.

With regard to the profile of homeless migrants from within the EU, young single men represent a substantial proportion of the homeless, and have an average age of 26-29 years. Homeless female migrants are, on average, younger than homeless men and often take extreme measures to avoid sleeping rough.

Homelessness among women is also related to personal relationship problems, with many having suffered sexual and physical abuse.⁴⁹

The vast majority of homeless people from the new Member States living in Western EU countries have experienced destitution and become homeless for the first time following their migration. However, a number of homeless migrants have previous experience of sleeping rough, including 10% of London's Polish homeless population. There is evidence that migrants who have already experienced homelessness have relocated to Member States where social welfare is perceived to be more generous, and/or to countries that have warmer weather conditions.

National policy approaches to tackling homelessness – and for dealing with problems specifically linked to internal EU migration - differ between Member States. A number of EU Member States have developed national homelessness strategies, although many still have not. There are signs of an emerging consensus on the need for better policy approaches supported by practical initiatives to tackle homelessness. National homeless strategies have begun to converge through the adoption of FEANTSA's ETHOS typology, which provides a definition of homelessness.

National methods for collecting data on homelessness are insufficiently reliable and robust in many EU countries. Consequently, local authorities, NGOs working with the homeless and providers of services for the homeless are not always aware of the scale of homelessness linked to internal EU migration or of the specific needs of homeless people from EU-12 countries. Data collection concentrates on recording details such as gender and age, but not always nationality. There is an ongoing need to adapt data collection methods so as to appreciate the full scale of the problem of homeless migrants from the new Member States. This makes it more difficult to develop appropriate policy responses to tackle homelessness and adapt homeless service provision accordingly.

Internal EU migration has already had, and is likely to continue to have an impact on service provision to the homeless at local and regional level. Local

⁴⁹ Edgar B, Doherty J. Women and Homelessness in Europe: Pathways, services and experiences. UK: University of Bristol. 2001. p 101

authorities are responsible for the immediate housing needs of homeless people and are on the front line in dealing with the economic and social consequences of homelessness linked to internal EU migration. The impact has been greatest in those Western European countries that have been the recipients of large numbers of EU migrants.

There are examples of initiatives by local councils and city authorities in implementing a differentiated approach to tackling some of the specific needs of migrants from EU-12 countries. These include the provision of services for the homeless in different languages, ensuring access to relevant healthcare and psychological services and offering the possibility of repatriation.

Several examples of good practice can be identified in the delivery of services to the homeless at local and regional level. For example, transnational cooperation has taken place between NGOs and local authorities in the UK as part of ‘reconnection projects’ to encourage homeless migrants from EU-12 countries to return to their countries of origin, where they may have family connections and wider support networks which improve their chances of escaping homelessness.

A key constraint for policies to return homeless migrants to EU-12 countries is the lack of adequate resources and capacity of many NGOs and services for the homeless to cope with an increase in the number of homeless people. However, there is some evidence that EU-funded programmes have helped in this regard. For example, in Poland, a number of major providers of services for the homeless take part in the EQUAL Community Initiative Programme, which focuses on strengthening their capacity and developing new approaches to promoting access to the labour market for marginalised groups.

There is evidence that the efficiency of services for the homeless can be improved through effective coordination between local authorities and providers of housing and social care to prevent homelessness and housing loss. Coordination between these stakeholders improves the delivery of services for migrants through the exchange of information, knowledge and good practices. Successful initiatives to tackle homelessness using this ‘three-way approach’ have been implemented in Belgium, Hungary, France, the Czech Republic and the UK.

The number of people recognised as homeless is likely to increase over time as EU-12 migrants gain full rights and access to social housing. Currently, many

EU-15 countries operate registration systems which prevent migrants from accessing housing and social welfare support. This could have wide-ranging implications for the budgets of local authorities if large numbers of hidden migrants start to register for social welfare.

There have been some population shifts within the EU among the Roma from EU-12 to EU-15 countries, with significant implications for the problem of the ‘hidden homeless’. The problem of homelessness among the Roma has also increased as a result of the destruction of Roma settlements in some EU countries, such as Italy⁵⁰. The Roma are at a considerable disadvantage when trying to access quality and affordable housing because of direct and indirect discrimination and discriminatory registration systems. Moreover, the Roma often lack the necessary education and language skills to find sustainable employment, and are likely to be in poor quality and temporary housing.

Some local authorities, however, have sought to address homelessness-related issues among the Roma. For example, in Spain and France, local authorities have been encouraged to provide housing for Roma, most of whom are living in shacks on the outskirts of cities. Some municipal authorities have responded positively to this challenge but there are problems in re-housing the Roma because of prejudice from local populations.

Overall, while there have been major economic benefits from the free movement of people and EU enlargement, the negative impact of increased levels of homelessness among EU internal migrants needs to be given further consideration.

There are also implications for local and regional authorities. These include the need for additional resources, the adaptation of existing approaches to tackling homelessness, and the revamping of services for the homeless to meet the specific needs of migrants from EU-12 Member States.

⁵⁰ Roma people living in camps are de facto excluded from accessing social housing as the current points-based system requires expulsion from private accommodation.

3.2 Policy recommendations

A number of steps could be taken at national and European level to address the emerging challenges arising from internal EU migration. A set of recommendations is provided below:

European

1. The Member States could be required to develop national strategies to combat homelessness within the framework of the streamlined EU Strategy for Social Protection and Social Inclusion.
2. The Member States could also be required to report on the implementation of national strategies on homelessness.
3. The EU should encourage the Member States to improve the reliability and quality of monitoring data on homelessness, in particular through strengthening client recording systems in homeless shelters.
4. National statistics offices should be encouraged to adopt a harmonised definition of homelessness for data collection purposes at EU level by Eurostat. This could be achieved even specific alternative definitions were to remain within Member States for policy purposes.
5. The full potential of EU funding programmes should be used to mitigate the impact of EU enlargement and increased internal EU migration on homelessness. The Structural Funds could be used both to strengthen the capacity of homelessness support services (ESF) and to strengthen the physical infrastructure for the homeless (ERDF). The FP7 European research programme and the Progress programme 2007-2013 could be used to strengthen policy understanding about the impact of EU migration on homelessness.

National

1. National strategies to combat homelessness should be developed, supported by a Monitoring Information Strategy to ensure effective reporting on their implementation.
2. A coordinating mechanism or agency at national level should be identified for data collection on homelessness.

3. National statistics offices should be encouraged to play a coordination role in the collection of data on homelessness (in some EU countries, this is currently carried out by NGOs such as homelessness charities).
4. The harmonised definition of living situations and homelessness developed by FEANTSA should be adopted as a basic framework for data collection. A set of standard variables should be developed for data collection.
5. A national directory of homelessness services could be adopted.
6. A strategy for the collection of (anonymous) data from homelessness service providers' client registration systems should be established.
7. Adequate financial support, including additional resources where necessary, should be made available to local and regional authorities (LRAs) that have seen a significant increase in homelessness linked to internal EU migration.

Local and regional

1. LRAs should develop policies on tackling homelessness and include mention of how the specific needs of homeless EU migrants will be taken into account in the provision of local services for the homeless.
2. LRAs should work together with services for the homeless (provided by NGOs and private service providers) to improve the collection of data on homeless people from EU-12 countries.
3. When designing services for the homeless, LRAs should recognise the different support needs of homeless migrants from the new Member States. This should include consideration of social, cultural and linguistic differences.
4. LRAs should ensure that homeless migrants from within the EU are provided with access to temporary accommodation in homeless shelters and the same types of homeless support services as nationals, in accordance with single market rules and principles.
5. In urban areas in EU-15 countries that are particularly affected by homelessness linked to EU internal migration, LRAs should cooperate closely with homelessness providers in EU12 countries, and consider the joint implementation of 'reconnection projects' to assist migrants in re-integrating into their countries of origin.

6. LRAs should draw on EU funding programmes such as the ESF to help them enhance their capacity to tackle homelessness among EU-12 migrants and to better address the specific needs of these groups.

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Interview list

While not formally required, to support the research we carried out a number of interviews with local and national authorities including the following list of homeless service providers.

Name and position of interviewee	No. of interviews (face to face)	No. of interviews (phone)	Interviews (total)
Freek Spinnewijn – Director of FEANTSA	1	0	1
Ewa Sadowska – Director of Barka, UK	0	1	1
Wayne Stanley – Director of Crosscare Ireland	0	1	1
Alain Regnier – Commissioner on homelessness for France	0	1	1
Cecily Herdman - Housing Needs Team Westminster Council	0	1	1
Catherine Jamieson - Glasgow Homelessness Partnership	0	1	1
Total	1	5	6