BACKGROUND PAPER

DEFINING AND ENUMERATING HOMELESSNESS IN CANADA

AUTHORSHIP

18 December 2020   Havi Echenberg   Legal and Social Affairs Division
                    Laura Munn-Rivard   Legal and Social Affairs Division

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

Library of Parliament Background Papers provide in-depth studies of policy issues. They feature historical background, current information and references, often anticipating the emergence of the issues they examine. They are prepared by the Parliamentary Information and Research Service, which carries out research for and provides information and analysis to parliamentarians and Senate and House of Commons committees and parliamentary associations in an objective, impartial manner.

This publication was prepared as part of the Library of Parliament's research publications program, which includes a set of publications, introduced in March 2020, addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. Please note that, because of the pandemic, all Library of Parliament publications will be released as time and resources permit.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2019, the Government of Canada implemented Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, which replaced the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. A key goal of Reaching Home is to increase government and community understanding of homelessness by ensuring that communities have the information and tools – analyses of shelter capacity, shelter use data, and nationally coordinated point-in-time (PiT) counts – they need to prevent and reduce homelessness.

Defining and enumerating homelessness is essential in order to understand the nature and extent of the problem, who is affected by it and how to address it. Most definitions of homelessness take into account two important facets of homelessness: the specific housing situation and the duration and/or frequency of homeless episodes. The Government of Canada's Homelessness Strategy Directives, which are part of the Reaching Home initiative, provide a definition of homelessness, founded in large part on the definition established in 2012 by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness.

Despite the persistent visibility of homelessness in Canada, it is challenging to count a population that lacks a permanent address or fixed location, that includes many "hidden homeless" and that is always in flux, as individuals move in and out of homelessness. In Canada, governments and other stakeholders have made efforts to enumerate homelessness by measuring shelter capacity, measuring shelter occupancy rates and using PiT counts (which offer a snapshot of homelessness in a community, generally in 24 hours).

More recently, the federal government, to overcome the shortcomings of previous efforts to assess the extent of homelessness in Canada, has provided communities with resources to support a national approach to enumerating the extent of homelessness in the country through nationally coordinated PiT counts. The first nationally coordinated PiT count took place in 2016 in 32 communities and the second count took place in 2018 in more than 60 communities; the third count was planned for March and April 2020. Many municipalities had to postpone their PiT counts because of public health measures implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic.

DEFINING AND ENUMERATING HOMELESSNESS IN CANADA*

1 INTRODUCTION

On 1 April 2019, the Government of Canada implemented Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, which replaced the Homelessness Partnering Strategy.[1] Under Reaching Home, support and funding is provided to Designated Communities (selected urban centres), Indigenous communities, territorial communities and rural and remote communities in Canada with the aim of preventing and reducing homelessness.[2] Reaching Home aims to meet selected targets of the National Housing Strategy (established by the *National Housing Strategy Act* in June 2019), such as reducing by 50% the estimated number of shelter users in Canada who are chronically homeless by 2027–2028.[3]

A key goal of Reaching Home is to increase government and community understanding of homelessness by ensuring that communities have the information and tools – analyses of shelter capacity, shelter use data and nationally coordinated point-in-time (PiT) counts – they need to prevent and reduce homelessness.[4] Designated communities will be required to adopt the federal government's homelessness management information system (the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System) or have a comparable one in place, with the goal of collecting data on homeless population groups and measuring progress towards the target of reducing homelessness.[5]

This publication examines Canadian and international definitions of homelessness, provides an analysis of the methodological approaches (including PiT counts) for enumerating homelessness, and evaluates the extent of homelessness in Canada.

2 DEFINING HOMELESSNESS

2.1 OVERVIEW

No single definition of homelessness exists, either in Canada or internationally, and advocates, researchers and policy-makers have interpreted homelessness in a multitude of ways.[6] Defining and enumerating homelessness is essential in order to understand the nature and extent of the problem, who is affected by it, and how to address it.[7] Furthermore, there is a particular benefit to developing a common definition, as it provides stakeholders with

> a framework for understanding and describing homelessness, and a means for identifying goals, strategies and interventions, as well as measuring outcomes and progress.[8]

Most definitions of homelessness take into account two important facets of homelessness: the specific housing situation and the duration and/or frequency of homeless episodes.

Homelessness is a broad term that can encompass a range of housing situations. These situations can be understood within a continuum of types of shelter:[9]

- At one end, *absolute homelessness* is a narrow concept that includes only individuals living on the street or in emergency shelters.

- *Hidden (or concealed) homelessness* is in the middle of the continuum and includes individuals without a home of their own who live in a car, with family or friends, or in a long-term institution.

- At the other end of the continuum, *relative (or at risk of) homelessness* is a broad category that includes individuals who are housed but reside in substandard shelter and/or may be at risk of losing their homes.

Absolute homelessness is often understood as only the "tip of the iceberg" because experts believe that many more individuals experience hidden and relative homelessness before reaching absolute homelessness. However, hidden and relative homelessness are less visible and less easily enumerated than absolute homelessness. For instance, while the 2016 Census counted 22,190 usual shelter residents (which is evidence of absolute homelessness), data from 2014 indicate that nearly 1 in 10 Canadians – approximately 2.3 million individuals – at some point in their life have experienced hidden homelessness.[10]

In addition to addressing housing situations, definitions of homelessness often contain the element of time. The frequency and persistence of homeless episodes can have important consequences for how the problem is understood and addressed. The three broad categories of homelessness are

- chronic homelessness – long-term or repeated homelessness, often experienced by individuals with chronic illness or addiction problems;

- cyclical or episodic homelessness – moving in and out of homelessness, sometimes as a result of change of circumstance, such as having been released from an institution; and

- temporary homelessness – relatively short in duration, sometimes caused by natural disasters or a house fire.[11]

The majority of people who become homeless experience temporary homelessness, often a one-time event where they are without housing for less than a month, and will manage to leave homelessness on their own, usually with little support.[12]

The various facets of homelessness – such as the specific housing situation and the duration and/or frequency of homeless episodes – inform the variety of definitions associated with the term.

Some organizations adopt a broader understanding of "homelessness." For example, the United Nations (UN) locates the problem of homelessness within the discourse of human rights.[13]

More concise definitions of "homelessness" are required for practical purposes, such as counting or delivering services to the homeless population. For instance, the definition used by the City of Vancouver's Homeless Count specifies the element of time. In a 2019 report, the city identified individuals as homeless if they "did not have a place of their own where they pay rent and can expect to stay for at least 30 days."[14]

2.2 CANADIAN DEFINITIONS OF HOMELESSNESS

The Government of Canada's Homelessness Strategy Directives (the Directives), which are part of the National Housing Strategy's Reaching Home initiative, provide definitions of homelessness, chronic homelessness and Indigenous homelessness.[15] Homelessness is defined as

> the situation of an individual or family who does not have a permanent address or residence; the living situation of an individual or family who does not have stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it.[16]

The directives explain that homelessness is often the result of "systemic or societal barriers," such as "a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination."[17]

According to the Directives, chronic homelessness refers to individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness and who meet one of the following criteria:

- they have a total of at least 6 months (180 days) of homelessness over the past year
- they have recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past 3 years, with a cumulative duration of at least 18 months (546 days).[18]

Individuals who are chronically homelessness have spent time in the following contexts:

1. Staying in unsheltered locations, that is public or private spaces without consent or contract, or places not intended for permanent human habitation … .

2. Staying in emergency shelters, including overnight shelters for people experiencing homelessness (including those for specific populations, such as youth, families, and newcomers), shelters for people impacted by family violence, and emergency shelters for people fleeing a natural disaster or destruction of accommodation … .

3. Staying temporarily with others without guarantee of continued residency or the immediate prospects for accessing permanent housing, or short-term rental accommodations (for example, motels) without security of tenure.[19]

Indigenous peoples are overrepresented among the homeless population in Canada.[20] Recognizing this situation, the directives provide a specific definition of Indigenous homelessness. This definition acknowledges the diversity of Indigenous peoples in Canada, and includes First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, status and non-status persons, regardless of residency or membership status. Furthermore, the definition is "subject to revision based on ongoing engagement and consultation with Indigenous Peoples."[21] Indigenous homelessness is defined as

Indigenous Peoples who are in the state of having no home due to colonization, trauma and/or whose social, cultural, economic, and political conditions place them in poverty. Having no home includes: those who alternate between shelter and unsheltered, living on the street, couch surfing, using emergency shelters, living in unaffordable, inadequate, substandard and unsafe accommodations or living without the security of tenure; anyone regardless of age, released from facilities (such as hospitals, mental health and addiction treatment centers, prisons, transition houses), fleeing unsafe homes as a result of abuse in all its definitions, and any youth transitioning from all forms of care.[22]

The definitions outlined in the Homelessness Strategy Directives are founded in large part on the "Canadian Definition of Homelessness" produced in 2012 by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (COH), a national research institute focused on homelessness in Canada.[23] The COH has also established a comprehensive typology (see Appendix A) outlining the range of housing and shelter circumstances for individuals who are homeless.

2.3 INTERNATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF HOMELESSNESS

The European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (known by its French acronym, FEANTSA) has elaborated a typology of homelessness called ETHOS (see Appendix B). According to FEANTSA, homelessness exists in three "domains":

> Having a home can be understood as: having an adequate dwelling (or space) over which a person and his/her family can exercise exclusive possession (physical domain); being able to maintain privacy and enjoy relations (social domain) and having a legal title to occupation (legal domain).[24]

Under this more comprehensive schema, homelessness consists of four categories of homelessness, representing a range of housing situations:

- rooflessness – living on the street or in emergency shelters;

- houselessness – living in various types of shelters or institutions;

- insecure housing – living under threat of eviction or violence; and

- inadequate housing – living in unfit or overcrowded conditions.

According to the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to housing, a definition for homelessness must go beyond reference to a "deprivation of physical shelter" and include "a loss of social connection."[25]

In February 2020, the UN's Commission for Social Development, at its 58th session, agreed to the first UN resolution on homelessness,[26] which stated that

> homelessness is not merely a lack of physical housing, but is often interrelated with poverty, lack of productive employment and access to infrastructure, as well as other social issues that may constitute a loss of family, community and a sense of belonging.[27]

That same resolution calls upon member states

> to collect disaggregated data on demographics, such as by age, sex and disability, related to homelessness and establish categories of homelessness, accompanying the existing measurement tools, and … to harmonize the measurement and collection of data on homelessness to enable national and global policymaking.[28]

3 ENUMERATING HOMELESSNESS IN CANADA: A METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

Despite the persistent visibility of homelessness in Canada and PiT counts[29] in many cities across the country, there are still no accurate national statistics on the size of the homeless population. It is challenging to count a population that lacks a permanent address or fixed location, that includes many "hidden homeless" and that is always in flux, as individuals move in and out of homelessness.

PiT counts offer a "snapshot of homelessness in a community over a set period of time, generally 24 hours."[30] The majority of PiT counts measure absolute homelessness, with volunteers surveying individuals who are living outdoors or accessing services for the homeless, such as emergency shelters. These counts provide two types of information:

- the minimum number of people experiencing homelessness in a community on a given night; and

- information on the population such as demographics, history of homelessness and service needs.

Therefore, successive PiT counts can be used to measure progress towards ending homelessness and to identify trends, such as increases or decreases in homelessness among certain population groups.[31] For instance, a report by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) on the second nationally coordinated PiT count of homelessness in Canadian communities provides a breakdown by demographics, including age, gender identity, sexual identity, Indigenous identity, newcomers to Canada and veterans.[32]

In the past, counts to enumerate the homeless population in various Canadian cities were administered by municipal and/or non-governmental organizations. In 2001, Statistics Canada assessed the feasibility of conducting various types of homelessness counts at the national level,[33] and estimated that a comprehensive count of people who are homeless would be prohibitively expensive and would present important methodological challenges.[34] To date, Statistics Canada has provided data on hidden homelessness and on individuals in shelters, including shelters for women escaping violence, but not "monthly or annual data on the number of people who are homeless in Canada."[35]

Recognizing that the absence of reliable data may constrain the development of effective measures to prevent and respond to homelessness, the federal government has adopted an alternative approach: providing funding and resources to allow for a nationally coordinated PiT count. In this approach, participating communities are provided with core standards for the methodology, such as common screening and survey questions, to guide how the counts are conducted. Communities may choose

to ask additional questions – perhaps from earlier counts or to provide more place-specific information – but the common questions allow for consistency in the count.[36]

Any community is invited to take part in the nationally coordinated PiT count, although Designated Communities must conduct a PiT count as part of the arrangement for funding received through the Reaching Home initiative.[37]

An ESDC report on the 2016 PiT count suggested that "findings from the Coordinated PiT Count can help to develop a truly national understanding of homelessness in Canada."[38]

4   WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE EXTENT OF HOMELESSNESS IN CANADA?

4.1   MEASURING THE HOMELESS POPULATION IN CANADA

The capacity of the country's shelter system provides some indication of the size of Canada's homeless population. ESDC's Shelter Capacity Report is a descriptive account of capacity statistics for emergency homeless shelters in Canada. Information is obtained by ESDC's National Service Provider List, a comprehensive listing of homeless shelters in Canada. According to the 2018 Shelter Capacity Report, there are

- 392 emergency shelters with 15,859 beds;

- 338 transitional housing shelters with 7,645 beds; and

- 451 shelters for women escaping violence with 7,494 beds.[39]

Statistics Canada also collects limited data on the shelter system. In the 2016 census, 995 shelters with more than 22,000 residents were enumerated.[40]

> At the time of the census, almost 7 in 10 of these residents were at shelters for people with no fixed address, one-quarter (5,365) were at shelters for women and children escaping abuse and the remaining 1,320 were in other types of shelters.[41]

The occupancy rate of a country's existing shelter space can also help determine the size of the homeless population. ESDC's National Shelter Study, an ongoing analysis of homelessness shelter use trends in Canada, provides national-level estimates of homelessness.[42] Most of the study's information is collected by the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS), a project that was part of the federal government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy and is now part of the Reaching Home initiative.

HIFIS is a national database of information about people who are homeless and the organizations providing services to these individuals.[43] The National Shelter Study uses anonymous HIFIS information from approximately 3 million shelter stays that occurred at more than 200 emergency shelters across Canada between 2005 and 2016. Data from 2016 indicate that on average, more than 14,000 Canadians slept in emergency shelters each night and shelters had an occupancy rate of 91%.[44]

Municipal and/or non-governmental organizations have also attempted to enumerate the homeless population in various Canadian cities.[45] For instance:

- The City of Calgary count determined that 2,911 people experienced absolute homelessness on the night of 11 April 2018.[46]

- The Metro Vancouver Regional District counted 2,223 people who were homeless on the day of its 2019 count, held on 13 March 2019.[47]

- The City of Toronto estimated that there were 3,876 people (non-refugee/asylum claimants) in shelters, 2,618 refugee/asylum claimants in shelters, 497 people in 24-hour respite sites, 118 people in 24-hour women's drop-ins, 45 people in the overnight Out of the Cold program, and 1,028 people in provincial institutions during its 2018 count, held on 26 April 2018.[48]

The findings provided above likely represent conservative estimates of the size of the homeless population. Because of the difficulties in measuring hidden or relative homelessness, an attempt to enumerate this group can be challenging. In addition, these counts estimate the size of a population at a given point in time; they do not determine the number of people that may experience homelessness over a period of time, such as a month or a year, as housing situations change.[49]

Furthermore, it is generally understood that women, families and youth are underrepresented in PiT counts as they are more likely to stay with friends or family, if possible, rather than live in shelters or on the street.[50]

4.2 CANADA'S NATIONALLY COORDINATED POINT-IN-TIME COUNTS

As noted above, the federal government, to overcome the shortcomings of previous efforts to assess the extent of homelessness in Canada, has provided communities with resources to support a national approach to enumerating the extent of homelessness in the country. The first nationally coordinated PiT count took place in 2016 in 32 communities across Canada and included the following:

- people who were "unsheltered" – for example, sleeping on streets or in abandoned buildings;

- people who were "sheltered" – for example, staying in emergency shelters or receiving vouchers for hotel stays if shelter beds were unavailable; and

- people whose homelessness was "transitional" – for example, staying in housing that was available for longer than emergency shelters but was not permanent.

In addition, some of the communities conducting coordinated point-in-time counts also included

- people housed in "systems" – for example, hospitals or prisons; and
- people whose homelessness was hidden – for example, people staying with someone because they were homeless.

The second count, which took place in 2018, involved more than 60 communities, with surveys taking place in March and April 2018. During this count, data was also collected on

- length of time homeless;
- gender and age, among other demographic factors;
- the nature of overnight accommodations, ranging from without shelter to staying with others; and
- Indigenous status.[51]

The results published in a 2019 report confirmed that "[o]n a given night," more than 25,000 people were experiencing "absolute homelessness in shelters or unsheltered locations" in 61 communities across Canada, and a 14% increase in absolute homelessness was observed in the communities that had also conducted the count in 2016.[52]

The third nationally coordinated PiT count was planned for March and April 2020.[53] Many municipalities had to postpone their PiT counts because of public health measures implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to ESDC, five of the Reaching Home–designated communities conducted counts in the first two weeks of March 2020 (before pandemic measures were in effect).[54] For instance, Metro Vancouver held its count on 3 and 4 March 2020 and released its results in October 2020.[55] ESDC has communicated with remaining communities that they could postpone their PiT count, with a suggestion to plan for a March/April 2021 count date.[56]

It is too early to know in what ways the COVID-19 pandemic will affect the current homeless population in Canada, and whether it might lead to an increase in the number of people who are homeless. In response to the pandemic, ESDC announced an additional investment in the Reaching Home initiative, as well as adjustments to existing program parameters.[57] A June 2020 Government of Canada guidance document for providers of services for people experiencing homelessness outlines recommendations on how to address COVID-19 outbreaks in both communities and facilities.[58]

5 CONCLUSION

Recently, there have been several important advancements that have helped stakeholders understand and enumerate homelessness in Canada. The creation of a definition of homelessness as part of the Government of Canada's Homelessness Strategy Directives, under the National Housing Strategy's Reaching Home initiative, will provide advocates, researchers and policy-makers with a common understanding as they examine and address homelessness. Furthermore, with the widespread adoption of the federal government's nationally coordinated PiT count in communities across Canada, more reliable and comparable data will be collected to improve the ability to measure progress. It remains to be seen to what extent efforts to enumerate and reduce homelessness in Canada will be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

NOTES

∗ This Background Paper is based on a publication by Havi Echenberg and Hilary Jensen, *Defining and Enumerating Homelessness*, Publication no. 08-30-E, Parliamentary Information and Research Service, Library of Parliament, Ottawa, 17 May 2012.

1. The first dedicated response to homelessness was the National Homelessness Initiative, introduced in 1999, which was replaced by the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, established in 2007, itself now replaced by Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy in 2019. See Employment and Social Development Canada [ESDC], *About Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy*.

2. ESDC, *Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy Directives*.

3. ESDC, *About Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy*; and Government of Canada, *Canada's National Housing Strategy: A place to call home*, p. 6.

4. ESDC, *About Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy*.

5. ESDC, *Homeless Individuals and Families Information System*.

6. The definitions of "homelessness" vary, with cited authors providing their own definitions. This publication makes no attempt to reach one definition of "homelessness," but rather highlights the variety of meanings of the term.

7. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness: The Homeless Hub, *Making the case for the Canadian Definition of Homelessness*.

8. Ibid.

9. Marie-Chantal Girard, "Determining the Extent of the Problem: The Value and Challenges of Enumeration," *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, Vol. 58, 2006, p. 104.

10. Samantha Rodrigue, "Hidden homelessness in Canada," *Insights on Canadian Society*, Statistics Canada, 15 November 2016.

11. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness: The Homeless Hub, "Addressing Chronic Homelessness," *Solutions*.

12. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness: The Homeless Hub, "How many people are homeless in Canada?," *About Homelessness*.

13. United Nations [UN] Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner, *Homelessness and the right to housing*.

14. Homelessness Services Association of British Columbia, the British Columbia Non-Profit Housing Association and Urban Matters CCC, *Vancouver Homeless Count 2019*, p. 9.

15. ESDC, *Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy Directives*.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. ESDC, *Final report of the Advisory Committee on Homelessness*.

21. ESDC, *Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy Directives*.

22. Ibid.

23. Stephen Gaetz et al., *Canadian Definition of Homelessness*, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness: The Homeless Hub.

24. FEANTSA [European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless], *ETHOS: Frequently Asked Questions*.

25. UN, General Assembly, Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context*, A/HRC/31/54, 31st Session, 30 December 2015, pp. 4 and 5.

26. UN, Department of Economic and Social Affairs – Social Inclusion, "First-ever United Nations Resolution on Homelessness," News release, 9 March 2020.

27. UN, Economic and Social Council, Commission for Social Development, *Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness*, Draft resolution, E/CN.5/2020/L.5, 58th Session, 10–19 February 2020, p. 4.

28. Ibid, p. 5.

29. Point-in-time counts are "a measure of the number of people who are homeless on a specific day." See Canadian Observatory on Homelessness: The Homeless Hub, "Point-In-Time Counts," *Solutions*.

30. Stephen Gaetz et al., *The State of Homelessness in Canada 2016*, COH Research Paper #12, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness: The Homeless Hub, 2016, p. 28.

31. Ibid., pp. 28–29.

32. ESDC, *Everyone Counts 2018: Highlights: Preliminary results from the second nationally coordinated Point-in-Time count of homelessness in Canadian communities*.

33. François Laflamme, *Survey of Homeless in Canada: Street Component*, Feasibility study, Statistics Canada, 11 April 2001.

34. Girard (2006), p. 102.

35. Statistics Canada, "Homeless," *Does Statistics Canada collect this information?*

36. ESDC, *Everyone Counts – A guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada – 3rd edition – Standards for participation*.

37. ESDC, *Everyone Counts: Coordinated Point-in-Time Counts in Canada*.

38. ESDC, *Homelessness Partnering Strategy Coordinated Canadian Point-in-Time Counts*.

39. ESDC, *Shelter Capacity Report 2018*.

40. Statistics Canada, "The population living in shelters: Who are they?," *The Daily*, 15 April 2019.

41. Ibid.

42. ESDC, *Highlights of the National Shelter Study 2005 to 2016*.

43. ESDC, *Homeless Individuals and Families Information System*.

44. ESDC, *Highlights of the National Shelter Study 2005 to 2016*.

45. For a summary table of point-in-time homeless counts in municipalities across Canada, see Canadian Institute for Health Information, Canadian Population Health Initiative, *Improving the Health of Canadians 2007–2008: Mental Health and Homelessness*, Ottawa, 2007, pp. 10–11.

46. Calgary Homeless Foundation, *Point-in-Time Count Report*, Spring 2018, p. 1.

47. The Homelessness Services Association of British Columbia, the British Columbia Non-Profit Housing Association and Urban Matters CCC, *Vancouver Homeless Count: 2019*, p. 7.

48.   City of Toronto and Government of Canada, *Street Needs Assessment 2018*, Results report, p. 3.

49.   J. David Hulchanski, *A New Canadian Pastime? Counting Homeless People*, University of Toronto, December 2000, p. 2.

50.   Calgary Homeless Foundation (2018), pp. 3 and 11.

51.   ESDC, *Everyone Counts – A guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada – 3rd edition – Standards for participation*.

52.   Ibid.

53.   ESDC, *Everyone Counts – A guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada – 3rd edition – Standards for participation*.

54.   ESDC, Personal communication, 30 July 2020.

55.   City of Vancouver, *Homeless Count*.

56.   ESDC, Personal communication, 30 July 2020.

57.   ESDC, *Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy – COVID-19*.

58.   Government of Canada, *Guidance for providers of services for people experiencing homelessness (in the context of COVID-19)*, 29 June 2020.

APPENDIX A – CANADIAN OBSERVATORY ON HOMELESSNESS: TYPOLOGY OF HOMELESSNESS

Table A.1 – Typology of Homelessness in Canada

Operational Category		Living Situation		Generic Definition
1. Unsheltered	This includes people who lack housing and are not accessing emergency shelters or accommodation, except during extreme weather conditions. In most cases, people are staying in places that are not designed for or fit for human habitation.	1.1	People living in public or private spaces without consent or contract	▪ Public space, such as sidewalks, squares, parks, forests, etc. ▪ Private space and vacant buildings (squatting)
		1.2	People living in places not intended for permanent human habitation	▪ Living in cars or other vehicles ▪ Living in garages, attics, closets or buildings not designed for habitation ▪ People in makeshift shelters, shacks or tents
2. Emergency sheltered	This refers to people who, because they cannot secure permanent housing, are accessing emergency shelter and system supports, generally provided at no cost or minimal cost to the user. Such accommodation represents an institutional response to homelessness provided by government, non-profit, faith-based organizations and/or volunteers.	2.1	Emergency overnight shelters for people who are homeless.	These facilities are designed to meet the immediate needs of people who are homeless. Such short-term emergency shelters may target specific sub-populations, including women, families, youth or Aboriginal persons, for instance. These shelters typically have minimal eligibility criteria, offer shared sleeping facilities and amenities, and often expect clients to leave in the morning. They may or may not offer food, clothing or other services. Some emergency shelters allow people to stay on an ongoing basis while others are short term and are set up to respond to special circumstances, such as extreme weather.
		2.2	Shelters for individuals/families impacted by family violence	
		2.3	Emergency shelter for people fleeing a natural disaster or destruction of accommodation due to fires, floods, etc.	
3. Provisionally accommodated	This describes situations in which people, who are technically homeless and without permanent shelter, access accommodation that offers no prospect of permanence. Those who are provisionally accommodated may be accessing temporary housing provided by government or the non-profit sector, or may have independently made arrangements for short-term accommodation.	3.1	Interim Housing for people who are homeless.	Interim housing is a systems-supported form of housing that is meant to bridge the gap between unsheltered homelessness or emergency accommodation and permanent housing.
		3.2	People living temporarily with others, but without a guarantee of continued residency or immediate prospects for accessing permanent housing.	Often referred to as "couch surfers" or the "hidden homeless," this describes people who stay with friends, family, or even strangers.

Operational Category			Living Situation		Generic Definition
3. Provisionally accommodated (*cont'd*)		3.3	People accessing short term, temporary rental accommodations without security of tenure.		In some cases, people who are homeless make temporary rental arrangements, such as staying in motels, hostels, rooming houses, etc.
		3.4	People in institutional care who lack permanent housing arrangements.		People who may transition into homelessness upon release from: Penal institutions; Medical/mental health institutions; Residential treatment programs or withdrawal management centres; Children's institutions/group homes.
		3.5	Accommodation/reception centres for recently arrived immigrants and refugees.		Prior to securing their own housing, recently arrived immigrants and refugees may be temporarily housed receiving settlement support and orientation to life in Canada.
4. At risk of homelessness	Although not technically homeless, this includes individuals or families whose current housing situations are dangerously lacking security or stability, and so are considered to be at risk of homelessness. They are living in housing that is intended for permanent human habitation, and could potentially be permanent (as opposed to those who are provisionally accommodated). However, as a result of external hardship, poverty, personal crisis, discrimination, a lack of other available and affordable housing, and/or the inappropriateness of their current housing (which may be overcrowded or does not meet public health and safety standards) residents may be "at risk" of homelessness.	4.1	People at imminent risk of homelessness.		- Those whose employment is precarious - Those experiencing sudden unemployment - Households facing eviction - Housing with transitional supports about to be discontinued - People with severe and persistent mental illness, active addictions, substance use, and/or behavioural issues - Breakdown in family relations - People facing, or living in direct fear, of violence/abuse
		4.2	Individuals and families who are precariously housed.		Those who face challenges that may or may not leave them homeless in the immediate or near future. [Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation] defines a household as being in core housing need if its housing "falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability standards and would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (meets all three housing standards)."

Source: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness: The Homeless Hub, "Typology," *Canadian Definition Of Homelessness*.

APPENDIX B – EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS WORKING WITH THE HOMELESS: TYPOLOGY OF HOMELESSNESS

Table B.1 – Typology of Homelessness in Europe

Conceptual Category	Operational Category		Living Situation		Generic Definition
Roofless	1	People Living Rough	1.1	Public space or external space	Living in the streets or public spaces, without a shelter that can be defined as living quarters
	2	People in emergency accommodation	2.1	Night shelter	People with no usual place of residence who make use of overnight shelter, low threshold shelter
Houseless	3	People in accommodation for the homeless	3.1	Homeless hostel	Where the period of stay is intended to be short term
			3.2	Temporary accommodation	
			3.3	Transitional supported accommodation	
	4	People in Women's Shelter	4.1	Women's shelter accommodation	Women accommodated to experience of domestic violence and where the period of stay is intended to be short term
	5	People in accommodation for immigrants	5.1	Temporary accommodation/reception centres	Immigrants in reception or short-term accommodation due to their immigrant status
			5.2	Migrant workers' accommodation	
	6	People due to be released from institutions	6.1	Penal institutions	No housing available prior to release
			6.2	Medical institutions[a]	Stay longer than needed due to lack of housing
			6.3	Children's institutions/homes	No housing identified (e.g., by 18th birthday)
Insecure	7	People receiving longer-term support (due to homelessness)	7.1	Residential care for older homeless people	Long stay accommodation with care for formerly homeless people (normally more than one year)
			7.2	Supported accommodation for formerly homeless people	
	8	People living in insecure accommodation	8.1	Temporarily with family/friends	Living in conventional housing but not the usual place of residence due to lack of housing
			8.2	No legal (sub)tenancy	Occupation of dwelling with no legal tenancy illegal occupation of a dwelling
			8.3	Illegal occupation of land	Occupation of land with no legal rights

Conceptual Category		Operational Category		Living Situation		Generic Definition
Insecure (*cont'd*)	9	People living under threat of eviction	9.1	Legal orders enforced (rented)		Where orders for eviction are operative
			9.2	Repossession orders (owned)		Where mortgagee has legal order to repossess
	10	People living under threat of violence	10.1	Police recorded incidents		Where police action is taken to ensure place of safety for victims of domestic violence
Inadequate	11	People living in temporary/ non-conventional structures	11.1	Mobile homes		Not intended as place of usual residence
			11.2	Non-conventional building		Makeshift shelter, shack or shanty
			11.3	Temporary structure		Semi-permanent structure, hut or cabin
	12	People living in unfit housing	12.1	Occupied dwellings unfit for habitation		Defined as unfit for habitation by national legislation or building regulations
	13	People living in extreme overcrowding	13.1	Highest national norm of overcrowding		Defined as exceeding national density standard for floor-space or useable rooms

Note: a. Includes drug rehabilitation institutions, psychiatric hospitals, etc.

Source: FEANTSA [European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless], *ETHOS: European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion*.