



Executive summary

The aim of the CSEYHP project was to combat social exclusion and poverty among young homeless people and those at risk of homelessness by gaining in-depth knowledge of the life trajectories of different young homeless populations in four countries – Netherlands (NL), Portugal (PT), Czech Republic (CZ) and the United Kingdom (UK) – and to explore the effectiveness of early intervention and reinsertion programmes. Methodologies used include literature reviews, secondary data analysis, interviews with NGOs, engaging homeless and ex-homeless young people as co-researchers, interviewing young homeless people, and observing and testing methodologies of intervention and case management in national contexts.

Family problems in combination with problems to find a proper and stable place to stay are the main risk factors and triggers of homelessness and social exclusion. Institutional and structural factors impact on homelessness and social exclusion as well, but at a later stage.

The solution to combating homelessness and social exclusion in Europe cannot be found in improving social services alone. Countries have to create pre-conditions on a structural level first to make improvement on the institutional level a success. Some research evidence exists that structural improvements can start at local level.

Seven out of 10 homeless young people in CSEYHP left school with an educational level of 0-2 (ISCTE); this disadvantage could lead to social exclusion and poverty all their lives. Young people require financial support to stay or re-enter education. Agencies working with homeless young people must be adequately resourced in order to provide education and training support as well as accommodation. The findings of the CSEYHP project demonstrate the necessity to promote integrated family support, not only financially, but also working on the relational aspects that constrain school attendance and/or school achievements. The school domain is a privileged field for early intervention and for building, together with disadvantaged youth, the motivation they need to prepare for and enter the labour market and adult life as partners and parents. School can play an important role in diminishing intergenerational poverty and exclusion.

Young homeless people are seriously deficient in social capital, mostly lacking family support. In many cases, problems in the lives of their parents (mental health issues, drugs or alcohol addictions) or even their premature death, are not sufficiently seen as indicators of risk. However, young people with family contacts are not necessarily happier, since conflicts may persist or solidarity can become a double-edged sword, when family obligations take precedence over a young person's educational opportunities.

In order to break intergenerational social exclusion, it is necessary to develop solidarity with families, in the form of support, including financial support and family mediation. The latter is a practice little known in PT and CZ that requires social investment in these (and other) countries. Older people, particularly grandparents within the family and trusted adults outside the family, provide anchor points and can be important role models for young people.

The current austerity measures and budget cuts in the social services sectors in the countries involved in the CSEYHP project are counterproductive to the position of young people at risk of homelessness or already homeless. Social workers and others involved in the support for homeless youth fear that the consequences of the economic crisis will impact negatively on the situation and resources for this vulnerable population. The project partners also fear that social-economic developments on the structural level will negatively affect the lives of our relatively small target group.

Project context and objectives

This study took place in the context of EU policy towards youth, known trends in poverty among EU youth leaving home and previous studies of youth homelessness. It studied the life trajectories of homeless youth in order to develop the concepts of risk and social exclusion both analytically and practically to the point where they can be used in programmes of reinsertion. It tested a key working method to combat social exclusion developed in the Netherlands through introducing it to agencies working with homeless youth in CZ, PT and UK. A variety of different approaches to early intervention with youth at risk of homelessness developed in the UK were introduced to homeless agencies across CZ, NL and PT.

The four countries in the study include one continental (Netherlands), one Anglo-Saxon (UK), one Mediterranean society (Portugal) and one Central European (Czech Republic).

A first objective was to understand the life trajectories of different homeless youth populations in different national contexts. Through literature review, secondary data analysis and expert interviews four national reports and one comparative report were prepared in order to:

- a) Compare the circumstances of homeless youth (family, education, migration etc)
- b) Compare homeless young people's prospects for social inclusion and reinsertion in different European countries given different patterns of services, social transfers, family support and housing market opportunities;
- c) Identify barriers to reinsertion not just between countries but within countries in relation to the gender, ethnicity and migrant status of young people.

To complete the first objective of understanding the life trajectories of different homeless youth populations in different national contexts 54 interviews were undertaken in each country. Where possible a quota sample was reached of equal numbers of young men and young women and one third young people being ethnic dominant, one third ethnic minority, and one third born outside the country. The purpose of these interviews was to:

- d) to understand youth developmental trajectories following a life-cycle perspective and, through understanding the processes of a young person's social exclusion, identify points of reinsertion;
- e) to understand young homeless people's own capabilities and resilience on which reinsertion programmes can build.

The quota samples could be broadly met in NL PT and UK with respect to ethnic background and born in the country. The lack of migration into CZ resulted in a large part of the sample being from the Czech dominant group; further, Roma young people did not want to identify themselves other than as Czech. The NL and CZ samples had more women than men.¹ Further information on the samples is given in Part I of this report.

The majority of the NL and UK samples were living in long or short term supported accommodation, reflecting the provision of services in these two countries. By contrast the large majority of the CZ sample lived on the streets or in squatted or temporary accommodation. A proportion of PT young people were living as homeless at home (e.g. in one room with a child or children within the household of their grandmother) the majority were not.

¹ Thematic report on gender, ethnic group and migrant dimensions of homeless – on project website www.movisie.nl/homelessyouth

Figure 1 Structure of the Sample

Sample Quota	UK	PT	CZ	NL	Total
Born in country/ethnic dominant	17	18	44	20	99
	(8F/9M)	(9F/9M)	(14F/30M)	(8F/12M)	(39F/60M)
	7,9%	8,3%	20,4%	9,3%	45,8%
Born in country/ethnic minority	21	18	3	15	57
	(12F/9M)	(9F/9M)	(0F/3M)	(7F/8M)	(28F/29M)
	9,7%	8,3%	1,4%	6,9%	26,4%
Immigrant	16	18	7	19	60
	(7F/8M)	(9F/9M)	(1F/6M)	(8F/11M)	(25F/35M)
	7,4%	8,3%	3,2%	8,8%	27,8%
Total	54 (25%) (27F/27M)	54 (25%) (27F/27M)	54 (25%) (15F/39M)	54 (25%) (23F/31M)	216 (100%) (92F/124M)

Note: F - Female; M - Male

The life history interviews with young homeless people actively involved homeless and ex-homeless youth as co-researchers. The four national teams trained the young people to work as interviewers with them and this experience is described in the Annex on Co-researchers that can be found on the project website.

A second objective is to develop the concepts of risk and social exclusion in relation to the experience of young homeless people and to the reinsertion process. We tested 'risk factors' of youth homelessness identified in the UK, for their applicability to the life trajectory of different homeless populations (gender, ethnic group, migrant status) in four different European settings, and to test the concept of social exclusion similarly. The development of this conceptual framework is not just of theoretical importance but has practical consequences for reinsertion programmes being developed by civil society organisations working with youth homeless populations. Therefore the sixth and seventh aims are:

- f) To better understand 'risk' and 'social exclusion' in relation to young homeless of different gender, ethnic group and migrant statuses.
- g) To use these refined concepts to aid the identification of reinsertion points.

A third objective was to test how different methods of working contribute to the reinsertion process for young people? What are the different policies that work? Obviously new pedagogies are important but before that young people who are homeless must be re-engaged. Two action research programmes had been developed in the Netherlands and the UK leading to changes in the way reinsertion services are delivered in these countries which were tested in the other countries in the research network: Dutch case management/ key working through 'The eight steps model' (ESM), developed by the MOVISIE team and Early Intervention Models from the UK (EIM), developed by many civil society organisations in that country.

Therefore an eighth aim was:

- h) To trial 'The 8 steps model' with young people in NL, UK, PT and CZ and to propose ways of making this method even more focussed to reinsertion, with young men and young women of different ethnic group/national identities.

Therefore a ninth aim of the project is:

g) To test how the three services of early intervention (family mediation, schools work, night stop) can be delivered in different national contexts.

Finally, a fourth objective of the study was: to investigate the roles of, and relationships between, the young person, trusted adults, lead professionals, peer mentors and family members in the delivery of these programmes across all four countries.

An aim of this study was: j) to discuss the roles of adults and peers in aiding reinsertion.

MAIN RESULTS

This study took place in the context of EU policy towards youth, known trends in poverty among EU youth leaving home and previous studies of youth homelessness. It studied the life trajectories of homeless youth in order to develop the concepts of risk and social exclusion both analytically and practically to the point where they can be used in programmes of reinsertion. It tested a key working method to combat social exclusion developed in the Netherlands through introducing it to agencies working with homeless youth in CZ, PT and UK. A variety of different approaches to early intervention with youth at risk of homelessness developed in the UK were introduced to homeless agencies across CZ, NL and PT. These understandings and both types of methods of working are important if European countries are to meet the targets set in the 2009 resolution of the Council of the European Union and of the Europe 2020 strategy. The understanding of the risks leading to youth homelessness and testing of methods of working with young people at risk benefit not only those who become homeless but also those who are in danger of social exclusion in other ways. Some young people become excluded through poor family relationships, a lack of their own domestic partnerships or a lack of social networks as well as through low educational attainment and a lack of employment. Others become excluded from mainstream society through mental health, drugs, or alcohol issues or the effects of an early criminal record on their ability to re-enter society.

EU Policy towards Youth

During the life of the three-year CSEYHP project EU policy towards youth was enhanced through the publication of the European Union Youth Report in 2009 which detailed the challenges for young people making the transition from education to work, from young person to partner and parent, across the EU.

The 27th November 2009 resolution of the Council of the European Union proposed a new framework for European cooperation in the field of youth beginning this year, 2010, and continuing until 2018. The framework includes: mainstreaming youth issues into other policies, reaffirming the European Youth Pact (March 2005 European Council) and its role in promoting the Lisbon objectives for jobs and growth, and supporting the Renewed Social Agenda which targets youth and children as a main priority. Much of its evidence derives from the EU Youth Report 2009 ² and Members States through the successful use of the open method of co-ordination. The two primary objectives of the resolution are to:

- '(i) create more and equal opportunities for all young people in education and in the labour market, and to
- (ii) promote the active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity of all young people.' (p3).

The resolution proposed a dual approach of both specific and mainstreaming initiatives. Both the specific initiatives – including non-formal learning participation, voluntary activities and youth work – and the mainstreaming initiatives in education and training, employment, health and culture, are of particular importance to young impoverished people.

Moreover the Communication from the Commission in March 2010 *Europe2020: A strategy for smart sustainable and inclusive growth*, reaffirmed the need to build Europe as a knowledge economy which was both efficient and with high employment. In relation to education and employment the targets included that three quarters of the population aged 20-64 should be employed and that the share of early school leavers should be under 10% (lowered from 15%) and at least 40% (raised from 31%) should have a tertiary degree. In relation to inclusion the target is that at least 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty. In particular three of the seven flagship initiatives are important for this project: 'Youth on the Move' to enhance the performance of education systems and facilitate entry of young people to the labour market; 'An agenda for New Skills and Jobs' aimed to empower people to

² Referenced as 9008/9 ADD

develop their skills throughout their lifecycle and increase mobility; and 'European platform against poverty' to ensure social and territorial cohesion and to enable people experiencing poverty and social exclusion to live in dignity and take an active part in society.

These flagship initiatives face difficult challenges in different societies in the context of the current economic crisis, particularly in relation to young entrants to the labour market. The unemployment rate for youth now varies between 8.6% (NL and Germany) and 42% in Spain – in the UK it is 20.3%. Impoverished households may also require that young people do not remain in education. These circumstances create challenges for both the Youth employment framework and the improvement of educational outcomes. Flexible learning pathways may well be the most appropriate for young disadvantaged people and lone parents but family support may not be available to bridge the gaps in social and welfare support. Young people with criminal records for whatever reason may not have their records expunged for up to 5 years (CZ and UK) and this affects their ability to enter employment. Other young people who are impoverished may fail to pay their health insurance (CZ, NL and PT) and suffer long-term consequences to their health.

Youth Homelessness in four European Countries

The four countries in the study include one continental (Netherlands), one Anglo-Saxon (UK), one Mediterranean society (Portugal) and one Central European (Czech Republic).

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- k) Identify barriers to reinsertion not just between countries but within countries in relation to the gender, ethnicity and migrant status of young people.

Findings:

Four national reports identified the particular circumstances facing homeless youth in the different countries which were drawn together in the comparative report. First there were considerable differences between the youth populations in 2009. This was based on EU and OECD statistics from 2006-8 that were available at the start of the project.

- NL and UK highest % population aged under 15 years: 18%.
- NL and UK highest proportion of foreign born, 10.6%.³ Two thirds of CZ foreign born are Slovaks. PT foreign born are from Africa and Brazil.
- PT highest proportion leaving secondary education early: 40% versus 13% NL and UK and 6% CZ.
- NL and UK higher proportions of young people employed 15-24 years.
- NL and UK higher proportions of young people living independently 18-24 years, 33% and 46%.
- Average age of motherhood was 29-30 years for all countries. But adolescent fertility rate in the UK is 26 per 1000 women 15-19 years versus 17 PT, 11 CZ, 5 NL.
- NL and CZ gap between youth and adult services at age 18 years.⁴

Second there were differences as well as similarities between the welfare regimes for homeless youth in the four countries.

- Social housing versus none or little social housing; NL 33% versus PT 3%. In the UK there was a shrinking social housing sector (18%)

³ The definition of foreign born is based on the OECD definition and figures. The national Dutch definition of foreign born includes those with a foreign born parent and is therefore higher at over 19%.

⁴ Comparative Report on Youth Homelessness and Social Exclusion in the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Portugal and the UK – on project website www.movisie.nl/homelessyouth

- Separate housing and homelessness systems in PT and CZ;
- Responsibility lies with statutory services and voluntary sector (NL and UK) compared with voluntary sector provision principally (CZ and PT).
- Multiple welfare systems – care, education, welfare, housing – working with the same client.
- Responsibility for homelessness placed with local governments in all countries
- Different legal definitions of homelessness: minimum (roofless or roofless plus, CZ and PT) versus maximum (no security of tenure, housing need, UK) or in between and in construction (NL).
- Homelessness a hidden or an acknowledged issue. Youth homelessness was particularly invisible in CZ and PT because of the scarcity of services specifically for youth. Young homeless people were particularly visible in the UK because of the homeless legislation and application process.

Third, expert interviews with managers and workers in Civil Society Organisations (CSOs/NGOs) gave evidence on the different issues of social exclusion facing young people they worked with.

- *Young people leaving state care.* This is particularly important in CZ and less so in PT and UK. UK has addressed this issue through legislation and case law but young people from care have more problems with life skills and rules than other young homeless people. PT has lower rates of young people being taken into care. NL has housing routes that young people from care can access.
- *Young people with low educational attainment.* In PT this is a general issue. In NL it is a particular issue for young people not speaking Dutch and Dutch speaking who leave school early. Born in the UK young people are more at risk through poor educational outcomes and low aspirations than many non-EU migrants.
- *Young people from workless households* and areas of workless households identified in UK. No expectations and no motivation. 'You have to want to be included' as different experts remarked.
- *Young refugees.* In UK refugees are more focused on education but some trauma support is required. In NL problem of non Dutch speaking. In PT a particular issue of being undocumented.
- *Young people from ethnic minorities.* Young people born in PT and NL defined as foreign born. In PT young people born in Portugal but whose families are from PALOP countries have been asked for documents from their 'home' country.
- *Criminalisation of young people.* Referred to by key workers both in CZ and UK because of the length of time before their convictions are 'spent' (5 years) but seen as a risk factor in all four countries.
- *Peer influence.* Young men led by peers. Young women by boyfriends.
- *Gangs in the UK part of the homeless problem.*
- *Gap between youth and adult services* at age 18 years in NL and CZ .

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Czech dominant group; further, Roma young people did not want to identify themselves other than as Czech. The NL and CZ samples had more women than men.⁵ Further information on the samples is given in Part I of this report.

The majority of the NL and UK samples were living in long or short term supported accommodation, reflecting the provision of services in these two countries. By contrast the large majority of the CZ sample lived on the streets or in squatted or temporary accommodation. A proportion of PT young people were living as homeless at home (e.g. in one room with a child or children within the household of their grandmother) the majority were not.

For the 216 respondents of the CSEYHP project patterns of intergenerational disadvantage were common. The problems they faced frequently began at an early age, involving financial and affective issues in their families including:

- 76% said that at the age of 12 years they had been brought up by a single parent as a result of the death of a parent or separation (especially UK and NL)
- 22% had parents who have been homeless;
- 48% parents/caregivers lacked income (70% UK; 57% PT; 35% NL; 28% CZ).

Half of the total respondents said that their parents/caregivers did not have enough income.

Consequently, the arguments around money and paying bills were also frequent, affecting the support of the child, from an early age. Many young people had difficult relationships with their parents:

- 26% parents/caregivers had mental health problems and 34% alcohol problems;
- 48% parents/caregivers were verbally aggressive and 43% physically aggressive in that arguments involved at least some hitting.

Although studies of intergenerational solidarity have asked questions about the support required by older generations from younger generations in relation to pensions and social care, it is also important to consider the support that has to be available whilst young people grow up. PT and Greece have the highest proportion of multi-generation households in EU-27 and in this study young people in PT report high levels of support from grandparents and other family members. In CZ it was also notable that some young people were raised by Grandparents rather than parents but in CZ this occurred without the support of an extended family.⁶

Among the total sample a quarter of young people had care experiences while they were growing up but another quarter would have wanted social service intervention in their families. This is an important finding but we are not sure how to interpret it. Firstly there is no shared or universal understanding of social services and therefore it is not clear what young people understood social services to mean. For example did they want financial support in order for their families' lives to be easier or would they have preferred to have been taken into care at some periods themselves? Overall 26% had been in care, a further 27% would have wanted social services intervention and 47% had never been in care and would not have wanted social services intervention. This also indicates that nearly 50% of the young people interviewed who did not want social services in their lives were potentially more vulnerable, marginalised and harder to engage. For example by being less likely to seek the help they needed, perhaps were unaware of the services available or did not believe the services would be able to help them. This has implications for services to be pro-active, to raise awareness of what is available in a way that young people can understand and to improve how young people participate in the development and delivery of services. As expected, young people who had lived in care were least

⁵ Thematic report on gender, ethnic group and migrant dimensions of homeless – on project website www.movisie.nl/homelessyouth

⁶ See Thematic report on Trajectories into homelessness and reinsertion points and Policy brief on intergenerational solidarity – at www.movisie.nl/homelessyouth

liable to report a good or happy childhood and a good relationship with one or two parents and more likely to report that arguments involved frequent hitting and that parental aggression was high.

What of the young people's futures? During the interview young people were asked about their educational attainments, any problems at school, any reasons they did not do well and their work aspirations and experience. Creating education opportunities is a key element to tackle informal ways of exclusion (lack of belonging, peer pressure and so forth) and more formal exclusion (lack of employment, poor level of income) in the future. Our findings highlight experiences at school that impact on early school leaving and absenteeism. Interviewees mentioned the following problems at school (*% within country where interview was taken*):

- 63% truanted (80% CZ; 70% NL; 57% PT; 46% UK)
- 53% had problems with teachers (74% NL; 56% CZ; 48% PT; 35% UK)
- 37% were school excluded (48% NL; 43% UK; 30% CZ; 26% PT)
- 41% were picked on by other kids (46% NL; 41% UK; 39% CZ and PT)

At age 19, 60% of young Europeans are still in formal education (EYP, 2009: 25). By contrast the average proportion of early school leavers is nearly 15% and only one third of young people who have a disadvantaged socio-economic background complete higher education (EYP, 2009). Within the CSEYHP sample 4% had not completed primary school (ISCED⁷ level 0) 18% had complete primary or first stage basic only (ISCED level 1) and 48% had completed secondary or second stage basic (ISCED level 2). Overall therefore 70% were at levels 0-2 educationally. Portugal demonstrated particular need in this area as 52% of young people in their sample were at education levels 0 and 1; 18 had left school at 14 years or under. At 16 years of age, 61 (28%) of those who had left education had already done so in the CSEYHP sample. Only 9 (4%) of the 216 young people in this study had qualifications sufficient to advance to higher education or were in higher education – an outcome desired for 40% of EU Youth in the 2020 agenda.

In the total sample an aspiration towards professional or white collar work (lawyer, social worker) was highest among non-EU migrants (32%) and among women (26% women versus 9% men). Conversely men from the dominant ethnic groups were more likely to aspire to vocational training – skilled manual work, IT and security (army and police) (26%) – particularly in the UK. Young people from CZ were more likely to aspire to working in a hostel, as a cook, and in construction. Nearly half the youth in our sample from PT (44%) reported they aspired to 'any job' reflecting the very difficult labour market for young people with low educational standards in PT. There was also evidence of the impact of the media on young people's aspirations in the UK; 18% aspired to work in the media, as a performer, in football, or just to 'be famous'. In the total sample this aspiration resonated most with young people from ethnic minorities born in the country (23%). A handful of young men in the NL and CZ samples aspired to run their own business or to 'be rich'.

Young people's aspirations were in strong contrast to outcomes. The majority of young people, 69%, worked or had worked in jobs requiring minimum training. A further 21% had never worked, had worked as street traders/cleaners or had work placements for experience only. A further 2% had returned to education. In the UK, many young people's work histories are very poor, and do not match their aspirations.

In our four samples, 33% of UK young people had never worked compared with 17% NL, 6% PT and 2% CZ. A further 30% of the PT sample and 22% of the UK sample have only had one job. Young people in UK and PT samples who had worked in more than one job mostly had worked in low skilled occupations. The high number of young people with no work experience in the UK is partly related to the age of the UK sample (61% of the UK sample are aged 16-19 years), and partly to UK government legislation banning asylum seekers from working. Eight of the eighteen young people with no work

⁷ International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) adopted by UNESCO

experience in the UK sample are non-EU migrants. Similarly, in NL young migrants without legal papers can neither work nor study.⁸

During interviews with young homeless people different poverty issues emerged. First there was poor nutrition in the UK, a country without non-cash transfers and with low levels of welfare payments; 64% of UK young people would have spent an extra £20 on buying food. There was a lack of shelter in CZ; 19% would have bought a dormitory place if given additional money. In PT family poverty led to young people leaving school early to join the labour market as unskilled workers and the aspiration of the majority of PT young people was for 'any job'. In the Netherlands, although levels of welfare income support were better, levels of mental health distress and substance abuse reported by the young people were worse.

Moreover within this sample of 216, 28% were themselves parents, including both young men and young women; the majority of young women had responsibility for their child whilst the majority of young men did not.

The practical and analytic development of the concepts of risk and social exclusion

A second objective is to develop the concepts of risk and social exclusion in relation to the experience of young homeless people and to the reinsertion process. We tested 'risk factors' of youth homelessness identified in the UK, for their applicability to the life trajectory of different homeless populations (gender, ethnic group, migrant status) in four different European settings, and to test the concept of social exclusion similarly. The development of this conceptual framework is not just of theoretical importance but has practical consequences for reinsertion programmes being developed by civil society organisations working with youth homeless populations. Therefore the sixth and seventh aims are:

- n) To better understand 'risk' and 'social exclusion' in relation to young homeless of different gender, ethnic group and migrant statuses.
- o) To use these refined concepts to aid the identification of reinsertion points.

To obtain the above aims we studied the risk factors contributing to social exclusion, the process and, the condition of social exclusion, according to the following causal chain: Risk factors → process of social exclusion → condition of social exclusion (Jehoel-Gijsbers, 2004)

- *Family situation main risk factor*

The main risk factor or trigger for social exclusion is a problematic family situation. The family problems originate in and follow two different routes: the financial-economic route and the socio-cognitive route. Stated briefly: most homeless young people have not had a stable childhood because their parents have insufficient financial resources or lack the necessary social and cognitive skills to raise their children well. Frequent arguments, violence, debts, addiction and traumatic events in family life are no exceptions in many of these families.

This situation in turn contributes to a high level of mental health problems (see also Martijn and Sharpe, 2006) and suicide attempts (half of the respondents in CZ) of many young homeless people. This finding is in line with evidence found in earlier research on (youth) homelessness which mentions "eviction (...) and relationship or family breakdown" as "the most important events leading to homelessness in most EU countries" (Busch-Geertsema, 2010: 6).

Remarkably, and as far as we know not found in previous research, in NL, UK and PT there is a marked decrease in most of the mental health problems faced by young people *after* they have left their last place of residence. The results of CZ on this topic give a mixed picture. So, some evidence is

⁸ Thematic report on capabilities and resiliences among young homeless populations and Policy Brief on Education - see www.movisie.nl/homelessyouth

found that young homeless are better off homeless than 'at home'. This says quite a lot about the severity of the situation they were fleeing from⁹.

This strongly suggests that identifying family problems and intervening at an early stage is essential to prevent a deterioration of the family situation and alleviating what is effectively a 'Hobson's choice' scenario: a choice between two unsafe and unwelcome alternatives: to be unsafe at home or unsafe and homeless. Some young illegal refugees didn't have a history of family problems. They reported that they had come from 'good families', but fled from their home country because of political, social or economical reasons. These young people became homeless because they could not get a residence permit or had problems associated with a lack of papers or a lack of the right to work.

- *Shelter & mental wellbeing*

The interviews we conducted demonstrate the close links between difficult family life circumstances and the lack of stable shelter. After losing or leaving their last permanent place of residence many of our respondents could not find a stable place of their own and many lived on the streets temporarily. Most of them lived in numerous different places¹⁰. This sets the scene for a disordered existence from which it is no longer possible to get back on track. From the point of view of our respondents the main risk factor is the combination of family circumstances and the lack of a stable shelter. Young homeless may end in a vicious circle in which different risk factors work together towards social exclusion and homelessness and lagging behind at school and in the labour market. This shows that the moment when young people run away from home is an important reinsertion point. The provision of a safe place to stay is crucial.

- *Institutional and structural*

The main risks for social exclusion for young homeless people arise at the individual and relational level. However, the way social exclusion of young homeless people develops over time is to a large extent determined by risk factors on the institutional and structural level. Here we find interesting differences between the four countries. One clear finding of the study is the difference in social provision in PT and CZ on the one hand and NL and UK on the other. NL and UK have an extensive and differentiated system of social or support services for the larger part financed by the (local) government (NL) or by central government (UK). (In the UK central government funding is channelled through local authorities largely to the NGO supported housing sector). In PT and CZ there is a lack of services for homeless youth.

Differences between NL/UK and CZ/PT can be traced back to the structural level. Welfare state models in the different countries influence daily lives of young homeless (Stephens et al., 2010: 257). In NL and UK the state offers an income to young homeless people if they can't live at home and are willing to accept guardianship and participate in education or work. Those young homeless are eligible for social services including (temporarily) shelter, which is paid for them. In PT and CZ state intervention is much less available. In PT the family takes over part of this interventionist function. Young homeless in CZ and PT have to arrange housing for themselves, which is extremely difficult because of housing scarcity and high prices in the private rental market.

The lack of a sufficient social safety net in CZ increases the risk of growing social exclusion and limits the chances of the young person overcoming their exclusion, whilst in PT young people can be excluded in relation to education and work whilst being included through their family network. By contrast in NL and UK the social safety net seems to limit the risk of an increasingly excluded position

⁹ Thematic report Social exclusion and homelessness in Northern, Southern and Central Europe – at www.movisie.nl/homelessyouth

¹⁰ Thematic report Social exclusion and homelessness in Northern, Southern and Central Europe – at www.movisie.nl/homelessyouth

of young homeless people. In CZ, respondents reported that their situation had worsened over the years and as years passed they ran a greater risk of living in the streets. The risk increased remarkably quickly between their 12th year and the moment they were interviewed, reaching 60% at the time of the interview¹¹. Mental problems and drug related problems increase as well. In PT the lack of state intervention is partly compensated for by the family, which supplies money and shelter. Yet the disadvantage is that young adults have to stay with their parents, even if the situation is unbearable.

In both CZ and PT chances in the labour market and for earning a sufficient income are more limited because of lower levels of education, and badly paid cash-in-hand jobs. In UK and NL chances for young people to overcome their excluded position seem to be somewhat higher; more young people report having some qualifications and can rely on benefits more often.

Regarding social exclusion as a process

Our study shows the importance of regarding social exclusion as a process in which a continuum of related problems influence each other. Our results match robust research evidence that understands homelessness “as the outcome of a dynamic interaction between individual characteristics and structural change” (Pleace, 2000, in: Busch-Geertsema, 2010: 12).

IMPACT: Methods of working with young homeless people that aid reinsertion.

Whereas the Netherlands and the UK have extensive networks of services, and long experience of developing different programmes, services for homeless youth in PT and CZ find themselves in different situations. Homeless youth are within many different types of hostels – for migrants, for drug takers, alcohol, as well as homeless hostels for all ages and in PT and CZ there isn't a clear classification of programmes that could be equivalent to the '8-step programme' and 'Safe Moves'. In CZ and PT policy towards individual young people is reactive: different levels of individual risk are not objectively identified but young people who *appear* most at risk get priority. Case managers are the decision takers and it is important to aid these key workers with tools they can use to aid reinsertion. Already there are multi-agency networking models in Portugal and it would be a short step to work with these models to test whether models from Northern Europe would aid this work.

The approach to changing policy towards youth homelessness and impacting on the young person's life was to create the circumstances in which civil society organisations working with young homeless people could be given tools that they found useful. Through this engagement it was also hoped to engage with local and national policy makers. It was a 'bottoms up' approach to policy change.

A third objective was to test how different methods of working contribute to the reinsertion process for young people? What are the different policies that work? Obviously new pedagogies are important but before that young people who are homeless must be re-engaged. Two action research programmes had been developed in the Netherlands and the UK leading to changes in the way reinsertion services are delivered in these countries which were tested in the other countries in the research network: Dutch case management/ key working through 'The eight steps model' (ESM), developed by the MOVISIE team and Early Intervention Models from the UK (EIM), developed by many civil society organisations in that country.

Therefore an eighth aim was:

p) To trial 'The 8 steps model' with young people in NL, UK, PT and CZ and to propose ways of making this method even more focussed to reinsertion, with young men and young women of different ethnic group/national identities.

Therefore a ninth aim of the project is:

g) To test how the three services of early intervention (family mediation, schools work, night stop) can be delivered in different national contexts.

- *Case management / the Eight Steps Model*

¹¹ Thematic report Social exclusion and homelessness in Northern, Southern and Central Europe – at www.movisie.nl/homelessyouth

The establishment of case management or 'Key working' in Northern Europe has been an important development in work with excluded homeless people. This project took a method of key working developed for adult homeless people by MOVISIE within reinsertion projects in the Netherlands that has now been adopted for half of all adult homeless hostels in the Netherlands and introduced it to other countries for CSOs to work with youth homeless populations.¹²

All countries share a positive view on empowerment and the need to take clients seriously. However, in practice empowerment is not very clear in key work methodologies. The strength-based and holistic view of the Eight Steps Model is highly appreciated in the evaluation. Building on clients' strengths seems to be an interesting point of departure. Working with the Eight Steps Model helped social workers to involve clients more extensively than they used to before.

One of the strengths of the Eight Steps Model is that it values the point of view of the young person. Working with goals and plans helps social workers and young people to keep the future in mind and helps young people to realise that the decisions they make now may be critical in terms of future opportunities. Working on reinsertion only makes sense when there are indeed reinsertion possibilities for young homeless people, like housing options and employment. Also the need for basic conditions within agencies became clear in the evaluation: the need for materiality to work systematically. The overall view is that the Eight Steps Model is an attractive model for young people.¹³

- *.Early intervention / the Safe Moves Model*

In the UK an early intervention method has targeted young people at risk of homelessness, the majority of whom are currently school excluded or running away, in order to provide a 'cluster' of three local linked services providing personal development, employment and education development, and family support to prevent exclusion and encourage reinsertion. The Safe in the City (SiC) programme ran from 1998-2004 and was based on research by Breugel and Smith (1999) that created an 'index of risk' by which young people at risk of homelessness could be identified and given these services. The programme has been continued by the Foyer movement under the title of 'Safe Moves' and is supported by the Department of Communities and Local Government).¹⁴

The SiC/Safe Moves model plus a number of other models of early intervention were introduced and tested during the final third of the CSEYHP research period. An early intervention toolkit and DVD were produced and disseminated within each country through national workshops and other context specific methods. For example CZ consulted with young people in a school and with staff from a NGO/ CSO. PT undertook sessions in schools, worked with a children's home and held meetings with social work practitioners. In the NL the process included carrying out interviews with national experts in this field, setting up partnerships with national youth institutes, conducting a literature review and producing a report based on the early intervention toolkit and issuing a press release. Even in the UK interest in the models has been instigated through the process of national workshops and other means of disseminating the material.

While the differing social, structural and cultural contexts and the limited time frame had a significant bearing on the implementation of the models, a number of initiatives are underway and formally reported on.¹⁵ The principle of early intervention has been acknowledged as sensible as has the need to raise awareness of the links between early risk factors such as running away. In our sample 60% had run away for one night, 42% for three or more nights and numbers were significantly higher in NL and CZ. Therefore it is important to improve how risk is assessed and responded to and for resources dedicated to preventing youth homelessness to be available. Improvement is needed in agency co-ordination and there are gaps in terms of support for children leaving institutional care, particularly in CZ and PT requiring resources to better equip young people for independence and to support them through transitions. The participation of young people in the design and delivery of services, for example peer education in schools to raise awareness; the increased provision of family mediation services as well as safe emergency and move-on accommodation have all been highlighted as fundamental to the success of early intervention to prevent youth homelessness.

¹² P van Leeuwen, Feantsa Newsletter, 2007

¹³ See Eight Steps Model evaluation on project website www.movisie.nl/homelessyouth

¹⁴ Breugel and Smith, 1999, *Taking Risks*. Safe in the City, And www.foyer.net for a description of 'Safe Moves'

¹⁵ Duckett, N. (2011) CSEYHP Testing Early Intervention Models. Work Package 10. April 2011

The design and implementation of programmes to promote socially innovative programmes for the most vulnerable and the most deprived communities particularly in relation to one parent families, the homeless and others has to be expanded to include multi-generation households that transmit disadvantage and young parents.

Young people and 'trusted adults'.

Finally, a fourth objective of the study was: to investigate the roles of, and relationships between, the young person, trusted adults, lead professionals, peer mentors and family members in the delivery of these programmes across all four countries.

An aim of this study was: j) to discuss the roles of adults and peers in aiding reinsertion.

Young people in PT and CZ were more likely to report a supportive relationship with grandparents whilst growing up: 24% in PT and 20% in CZ. Grandparents were most frequently cited by young people after mother as their main support person whilst growing up, ahead of fathers (including young people who named both parents). However, extended family support was very different between the four samples. In the PT sample three quarters of young people (76%) had support from an adult relative plus a grandparent or a godparent whilst growing up, compared with a minority of young people in the other samples (28% CZ; 24% NL; 19% UK). This means that grandparent support in PT was part of an extended family network whilst in CZ grandparent support was frequently a substitute for parental support and without backing from other family members.

At the time of interview young people in the CZ sample were the most isolated. The majority of PT young people still had multiple attachments to family and partners or friends (61%), compared with NL and UK, 30% and 28% and only 9% for CZ. Young people in the NL and CZ samples were most likely to report that there were times they would have liked to return home but couldn't (67% CZ, 65% NL versus 46% PT, 44% UK). The CZ sample had the highest proportion reporting current attempted suicide (15%), self harm (13%), problems with alcohol (32%) and problems with drugs (44%).

Young people in the NL and UK samples were most likely to have a key worker (83% and 74%) compared with less than half in PT and CZ (48% and 45%). Two thirds of PT and CZ young people without a key worker/ link worker would like one.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

According to the project's operationalisation of social exclusion as a multi-dimensional concept the *condition* of social exclusion certainly applies to *our sample* of homeless young people. In terms of economic and structural exclusion, not surprisingly, a lack of a place of one's own and a lack of a stable home situation form an elementary form of social exclusion. Of interest are the differences between the four countries. In NL, the UK and PT, respondents rarely have no roof over their heads; they manage to find (temporary) shelter with friends, family or in social service facilities. Nonetheless, more than half of the young people who were interviewed did not have a place of their own. In CZ the situation is different: many respondents (60%) are actually living on the streets.

Young people in our sample are also affected by social exclusion in terms of *material deprivation*. In the UK, PT and NL, about half of the young people interviewed did not have enough money to manage financially. Interestingly, in CZ, this applied to only one fourth of the young people, despite the fact that 80% of the young people in CZ reported having debts. The problem of debt is relatively significant in the other countries as well.

One important subjective indicator of social exclusion is the *sense of being unsafe* that many (between 48% and 75%) of the young people said that they had experienced in their life.

In terms of *social participation*, another dimension of social exclusion, the majority of the young people in all of the countries reported having a group of friends and someone they could turn to when they feel unsafe. This suggests that there is less exclusion in this regard. In-depth interviews with respondents, however, show that social contacts do not always have a positive effect on young people. The vulnerability of their positions places young people at risk of encountering people (like juvenile delinquents, drug dealers, pimps) who take advantage of them.

Risk factors of social exclusion

The interviews with young homeless people looked back to their past lives. This gives a picture of risk factors on different levels (individual, relational, institutional and structural). Risk factors on different levels – individual, relational or institutional and structural – are interrelated.

- ***Family situation main risk factor***

The main risk factor or trigger for social exclusion is a problematic family situation. The family problems originate in and follow two different routes: the financial-economic route and the socio-cognitive route. Stated briefly: homeless young people do not have a stable childhood because their parents have insufficient financial resources or lack the necessary skills to raise their children well. Almost all of the families were characterised by conflicts. Some of the young people were neglected or (physically or sexually) abused. Some of the parents, although their intentions were good, were incapable of raising their children because of psychosocial problems. Traumatic events in family life, like divorce, imprisonment or even death of one of the parents occurred well above average and form an additional risk. Ultimately this leads to losing or leaving the permanent place of residence. This situation in turn contributes to a high level of mental health problems (see also Martijn and Sharpe, 2006) and suicide attempts (half of the respondents in CZ). These problems form a serious barrier to day-to-day functioning.

This finding is in line with evidence found in earlier research on (youth) homelessness which mentions “eviction (...) and relationship or family breakdown” as “the most important events leading to homelessness in most EU countries” (Busch-Geertsema, 2010).

Remarkably, and as far as we know not found in previous research, in NL, UK and PT there is a marked decrease in most of the mental problems faced by young people *after* they have left their last place of residence. The results of CZ on this topic give a mixed picture. So, some evidence is found that young homeless are better off homeless than ‘at home’. This says quite a lot about the severity of the situation they were escaping from.

- ***Shelter & mental wellbeing***

The interviews we conducted demonstrate the close links between difficult family life circumstances and the lack of a stable shelter. After losing or leaving their last permanent place of residence a lot of our respondents could not find a stable place of their own and even live in the streets temporarily. Most of them live in numerous different places. This sets the scene for a disordered existence from which it is no longer possible to get back on track. From the point of view of our respondents the main risk factor is the combination of family circumstances and the lack of a stable shelter.

Young homeless may land in a vicious circle in which different risk factors work together towards social exclusion and homelessness and staying behind at school and in the labour market.

- ***Institutional and structural***

One clear finding of the study is the difference in social provision in PT and CZ on the one hand and NL and UK on the other. NL and UK have an extensive and differentiated system of social services for the larger part financed by the (local) government (NL) or by private funding (UK). In PT and CZ there is a lack of services for homeless youth.

Part of the Combating Youth Homelessness project is the testing of two intervention models. The test made perfectly clear that PT and CZ lack the infrastructure (finances, places, personnel) for early intervention or key-working. Building such an infrastructure requires some structural changes. Differences between NL/UK and CZ/PT can be traced back to the structural level. Welfare state models in the different countries influence daily lives of young homeless (Stephens et al., 2010: 257). The central question is: is there any state intervention when the market does not provide an income or other primary needs like a roof above one's head (Esping-Andersen, 1990). In NL and UK the state offers an income to young homeless people if they can't live at home and are willing to accept guardianship and participate in education or work. Those young homeless are eligible for social services including (temporarily) shelter, which is paid for them. In PT and CZ state intervention is much less available. In PT the family takes over part of this interventionist function. Young homeless in CZ and PT have to arrange housing for themselves, which is extremely difficult because of scarcity and high market prices.

Structural and institutional risk factors are reflected in the situation of the young homeless in PT and CZ. In CZ, the situation of our respondents worsened over the years, as they tell in retrospect. They ran a greater risk of living in the streets. The risk increases remarkably quickly between their 12th year and the moment they were interviewed, reaching 60% at the time of the interview. Mental problems and drug related problems increase as well. In PT the lack of state intervention is partly compensated for by the family, which supplies money and shelter. Yet the disadvantage is that young adults have to stay with their parents, even if the situation is unbearable.

In both CZ and PT chances on the labour market and earning a sufficient income are more limited because of lower levels of education, and badly paid cash-in-hand jobs. In UK and NL chances for young people to overcome their excluded position, seem to be somewhat higher. Young people are better educated and can rely on benefits more often.

The process of social exclusion

The main risks for social exclusion for young homeless people arise at the individual and relational level. This holds true for all four countries.

However, the way social exclusion of young homeless people develops over time is to a large extent determined by risk factors on the institutional and structural level. Our results match robust research evidence that understands homelessness "as the outcome of a dynamic interaction between individual characteristics *and* structural change" (Pleace, 2000, in: Busch-Geertsema, 2010). Here we find interesting differences between the four countries. The lack of a sufficient social safety net in CZ and PT, especially social services, increases the risk of growing social exclusion and limits the chances of overcoming the excluded position, while in NL and UK the social safety seems to limit the risk of an increasingly excluded position of young homeless people.

Combating Poverty

2010 has been labeled the European Year Against Poverty and Social Exclusion. According to the EU Youth strategy (2010-2018) "The social exclusion and poverty of young people and the transmission of such problems between generations should be prevented."

Our research shows that the level of social exclusion and the risks for social exclusion differ per member state. This means that combating social exclusion and homelessness in PT and CZ has to take place on a structural and institutional level as well as on an individual and relational level.

Structural measures have to be taken to create pre-conditions for an infrastructure in which effective interventions can be applied.

Recent research on (youth) homelessness shows that "a range of local influences may shape policies towards homeless people, not simply the overarching structure of the welfare regime" (Olsson and Nordfeldt, 2008; Hansen Löfstrandt, 2010). Whether local policy can make a difference depends on which institutional and structural factors are within the responsibility of the local authorities. As Busch-Geertsema states: "effective homeless strategies aim not only at improving the effectiveness of homeless services (...) but also at filling the gaps in mainstream provision" (2010: 49).

Prevent social exclusion by early intervention and family support

Social exclusion of young homeless people starts at a young age and is often rooted in a disadvantaged family situation. Interventions are needed that will be aimed directly at these family problems at an early stage. Interventions like these should at least consist of: a risk assessment to identify young people at risk (with a checklist of important risk factors like economical deprivation, arguments accompanied by violence, death of parent and running away), family mediation and support to improve the family situation. Family support should ideally consist of an integrated approach in which different domains, like parenting, finances, education and relational aspects are covered. When the family situation does not improve and the (mental) health and safety of children is at risk, more drastic interventions like placing in care or alternative housing should take place.

Provide affordable social housing for youth

Affordable social housing provisions for young people are scarce in most countries. This means that the possibilities to run an independent household are very limited for young people with a low income and disadvantaged position – even if they are essentially able to do so. Different types of accommodation should be available for different types and ages of homeless youth, from emergency accommodation to permanent and independent accommodation. Less independent youth might need supported accommodation for some time.

Stable and continuous care and social provisions for youth at risk

Our research shows that a broad network of social services for young people offers chances to surmount their homelessness and social exclusion. Therefore the existence of social provisions for young people at risk is a prerequisite to combat social exclusion of homeless young people. A second requisite is the safety and stability within these provisions. Social provisions should not be a risk factor to young people.

Social services and key working are important, but cannot and should not take over individual responsibility of the young homeless for their own lives. Empowerment can serve as a basis for young people to get a grip on their own lives. By increasing their resilience they are able to fight possible setbacks in the future.

Further debate

Macro-policies impact on youth homelessness in different countries. Nevertheless, homelessness seems to be triggered by family problems *in the first place*. It seems that youth homelessness in the four countries under research is hardly ever caused by structural factors – like poverty – alone. Without a negative family background, no young person becomes homeless. Even with the older respondents under research, especially in PT or CZ, hardly any respondent (between 16-25) reported a happy family life and homelessness thereafter caused by structural (or institutional) factors. This is quite interesting and not debated as such in homeless literature. Longitudinal research on pathways to homelessness and social exclusion may shed light on this subject, which can offer useful insights into direct youth homelessness interventions.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NEEDS OF HOMELESS YOUTH

The young people in this study present huge challenges to the aims of the 2009 resolution of the Council of the European Union regarding European cooperation in the field of youth, and to the Europe 2020 agenda. The specific initiatives suggested in the resolution – including non-formal learning participation, voluntary activities and youth work – and the mainstreaming initiatives in education and training, employment, health and culture, are of particular importance to young homeless people. Young people interviewed for the CSEYHP Project had fewer opportunities and many born in the country had experienced social exclusion from an early age and all along their life trajectory. While the average proportion of early school leavers across Europe is 15%, in the CSEYHP sample 36% had left school at 16 years or below. Whilst the proportion of young people with higher

education qualifications across Europe is 30%, among the CSEYHP sample only 4% had qualifications sufficient to allow them to enter higher education, or were in higher education.

Early school leaving in Europe is strongly linked to social disadvantage and low education backgrounds. Vulnerable groups are especially affected such as young people who have been in care and those with special educational needs. Early school leaving is influenced by educational factors, individual circumstances and socio-economic conditions. It is a process which often starts in primary education with first experiences of failure and alienation from school. The results of our survey confirm previous findings in this field. In this policy brief we address the challenges of the 2009 and 2020 objectives in the context of our study of homeless young people who have had even fewer opportunities than other young people and who are seriously deficient in social capital.

Addressing disrupted educational paths

There has been a continuing upward movement in the proportion of young Europeans with higher qualifications. In the age group 25-29 years, nearly 80% will have completed formal education and 60% of young Europeans are still in formal education at 19 years of age (EYP, 2009: 25). By contrast the average proportion of early school leavers is nearly 15% and only one third of young people who have a disadvantaged socio-economic background complete higher education (EYP, 2009). Within the CSEYHP sample 4% had not completed primary school (ISCTE level 0) 18% had complete primary or first stage basic only (ISCTE level 1) and 48% had completed secondary or second stage basic (ISCTE level 2). Overall therefore 70% were at levels 0-2 educationally. Portugal demonstrated particular need in this area as 52% of young people in their sample were at education levels 0 and 1; 18 had left school at 14 years or under. At 16 years of age 61 of those who had left education had already done so in the CSEYHP sample.

Creating education opportunities is a key element to tackle informal ways of exclusion (lack of belonging, peer pressure and so forth) and more formal exclusion (lack of employment, poor level of income) in the future. Our findings highlight experiences at school that impact on early school leaving and absenteeism. Interviewees mentioned the following problems at school (*% within country where interview was taken*):

- 63% truanted (80% CZ; 70% NL; 57% PT; 46% UK)
- 53% had problems with teachers (74% NL; 56% CZ; 48% PT; 35% UK)
- 37% were school excluded (48% NL; 43% UK; 30% CZ; 26% PT)
- 41% were picked on by other kids (46% NL; 41% UK; 39% CZ and PT)

Schools frequented by disadvantaged youth tend to concentrate in segregated neighbourhoods and are often a high pressure environment, where young people perpetuate the aggression they experience at home. Lack of motivation is also a serious problem that calls for investment in teaching techniques and stimulating environments to compensate, instead of aggravate, the problems of exclusion. Some early intervention methods train young people in conflict resolution with their peers as well as with their parents (see DVD 'Early Intervention Methods in the UK')

Young people in the CSEYHP study experienced disrupted educational paths for several reasons.

Interviewees gave the following reasons for not achieving what they would have wished at school:

- 21% no motivation to continue education (32% PT; 22% UK; 17% NL; 13% CZ)
- 15% lack of money (26% PT; 13% UK; 17% CZ; 6% NL)
- 10%, (girls) having a child (20% PT; 9% UK; 7% CZ; 4% NL)
- 10% problems with mathematics, which contributed to them leaving school (22% PT; 9% CZ; 7% UK; 0% NL)
- 9% no information services to support (22% PT; 9% UK; 2% CZ and NL)

Further, some stated that the lack of a place for themselves in which to study, had a bad influence on their school and career.

Poor school outcomes and school exclusion in turn lead to family trouble creating a vicious circle of school failure and family arguments. Family problems can increase the chance that peer influence becomes more important than parents, exacerbating school truancy, school exclusion and even joining a gang. Eventually this causes young people to break with their families or to be turned out of their family homes.

Poor families can also directly lead to poor schooling. In the sample of young people from Portugal, several reported they had to leave school early against their will, because of family poverty. Early education is needed to support failing children. Early intervention in the family should include financial support to enable children to remain in education. However, national policy tends to go the other way. *A successful programme in the UK which gave a weekly allowance to less well off 16-19 year olds continuing in education covering their food, travel and book costs (the EMA - Educational Maintenance Allowance) has recently been reduced from covering 45% of pupils to covering 16-17%.*

Work aspirations and work outcomes

Although educational achievements were low, it does not mean that young people did not have their own aspirations. The proportion of young people who wanted to work professionally, mostly in caring professions such as social work, youth work but also as lawyers, was highest in the UK (29%). In the total sample this aspiration was highest among non-EU migrants (32%) and among women (26% women vs 9% men). Conversely UK men from the dominant ethnic groups aspired to vocational training – skilled manual work, IT and security (army and police) (26%). Young people from CZ were more likely to aspire to working in a hostel, as a cook, and in construction, despite generally having higher qualifications than other homeless youth. Nearly half the youth in our sample from PT (44%) reported they aspired to ‘any job’ reflecting the very difficult labour market for young people with low educational standards in PT. There was also evidence of the impact of the media on young people’s aspirations in the UK; 18% aspired to work in the media, as a performer, in football, or just to ‘be famous’. In the total sample this aspiration resonated most with young people from ethnic minorities born in the country (23%). A handful of young men in the NL and CZ samples aspired to their own business or to ‘be rich’.

Young people’s aspirations were in strong contrast to outcomes. The majority of young people, 69%, worked or had worked in jobs requiring minimum training. A further 21% had never worked, had worked as street traders/cleaners or had work placements for experience only. A further 2% had returned to education. In the UK, many young people’s work histories are very poor, and do not match their aspirations.

In our four samples, 33% of UK young people had never worked compared with 17% NL, 6% PT and 2% CZ. A further 30% of the PT sample and 22% of the UK sample have only had one job. Young people in UK and PT samples who had worked in more than one job mostly had worked in low skilled occupations. The high number of young people with no work experience in the UK is partly related to the age of the UK sample (61% of the UK sample are aged 16-19 years), and partly to UK government legislation banning asylum seekers from working. Eight of the eighteen young people with no work experience in the UK sample are non-EU migrants. Similarly, in NL young migrants without legal papers can neither work nor study.

The situations in the four countries with respect to disadvantaged youth are very different. The CZ sample has higher educational levels, but within a society with general high levels of education they are as disadvantaged in achieving work. The PT sample includes many early leavers who left because of family pressure as well as their own disengagement and a lack of information about how they could proceed in education and training. The UK sample includes many young people who were school excluded and disengaged and lacked skills and training, particularly young men who aspired to skilled

work rather than professional employment. The NL sample had the disadvantage that half of them were living in social care for part of their lives.

Current engagement

Young people in the UK were most likely to report there were no training options for the job they wanted (15%), whilst young people in PT reported a lack of money, lack of information or having a child as a reason for not finding work they wanted. However other young people from PT (32%,) and UK (22%) reported having no motivation.

Young people reported their main activity at the time of the interview, and other activities as well. But the 30% of young people who reported being unemployed, looking for work, as their *main* activity, understates the proportion who are unemployed. Overall 52% of young people reported they were unemployed and looking for work at the time of the interview, but they were also in part-time education or on a government scheme, for example, and reported this as their main activity. PT had the lowest proportion looking for work (44%) but otherwise the results were similar across country, ethnic group and gender. However it would be wrong to view these young people simply as not in employment, education or training – although at different times in their lives the majority will have been so and half are currently classified as unemployed and looking for work. Their work aspirations compared with their work experiences (as above) tell us a different side of the story.

In the CZ sample, young people generally received a better education than young people in other samples and had a much wider range of job experiences associated with a closed labour market; they worked in warehouse and driving, construction, fruit picking, army/security guard. Only NL young people had nearly as great a range of employment. By comparison, young people in the UK sample, living in a liberal regime experienced both an open labour market and high risk; 33% had never experienced real work. They were younger than the CZ sample but young people can work from 16 years of age in the UK; they also included non-EU migrants who could not work whilst being assessed. However, the young people in the UK sample also had poor qualifications and were competing for work in a labour market which was open to better qualified migrants from across the EU.

Young people in the PT sample reported they lacked knowledge of where to obtain services and also identified a greater need for employment, education and learning, creative learning and even physical health services. In UK and NL some young people had voluntary or work experience placement experiences whilst in PT and CZ they did not; given the range of work experience in CZ this particular form of support may not have been necessary, but given the need for further training identified by young people in PT it is apparent that PT agencies should develop this as a priority. NL young people were more likely to identify a need for support in relation to money management and mental health; because their material needs were met through welfare many young people had disengaged temporarily from the search for work.

There are work aspirations among the *majority* of the young people in our samples which have not been fulfilled. Partly this is an issue of social factors affecting whole generations of young people – changes in the labour market and closed and open labour markets (young people from the UK were particularly disadvantaged) – but partly it relates to personal factors including their own level of resilience and lack of family support.

In our four samples different types of assistance were required. PT young people required information and training options and financial support. In the UK some aspirations required management through programmes that built other skills besides those aspired to - for example electrical, electronic and computing skills alongside media and performance skills for young people with these aspirations. In the UK key workers were often at a disadvantage in building realistic expectations because of the lack of training options and constraints on undertaking paid work whilst maintaining welfare payments to meet housing costs. In CZ young people found the greatest variety of employment, but many were

employed below their educational level. Only in NL did young people report they were not constrained by a lack of training options. One striking difference across the total sample is the desire of some non-EU migrants and some women to become professional workers. By comparison young men from the ethnic dominant groups wanted to become skilled workers.

Effective civil society and state support for educationally disadvantaged young people

The EU Strategy for Youth “Investing and Empowering - A renewed open method of coordination to address youth challenges and opportunities” (COM(2009) 200 final) establishes the need for ‘joined-up policy’ for investing and empowering youth. This situation is being aggravated under the current scenario of economic crisis (*“Many investment plans, talents and ideas risk going to waste because of uncertainties, sluggish demand and lack of funding”*, Europe 2020 Strategy).

Engagement with ‘trusted adults’ is of particular importance for disadvantaged youth with family problems. The CSEYHP project findings corroborate the EC guideline for mobilising all actors involved in the life of youth (parents, teachers, social workers, health professionals, youth workers, young people themselves, police and justice, employers) to prevent social exclusion. Young homeless people and young people at risk of becoming homeless identify an overwhelming range of physical and mental health threats and service needs.

The CZ sample had the highest proportion reporting current attempted suicide (15%), self harm (13%), problems with alcohol (32%) and problems with drugs (44%). Young people in the CZ and NL samples also were likely to identify a need for mental health services.

Whilst young people in CZ were least likely to identify the need for education support (6% vs 38% total sample), they were equally likely to want employment support (56% vs 51% total sample). Young people in the Portuguese sample were most likely to need employment support (65%), education/learning support (74%) and physical health support (35%). These findings demonstrate the role that school could or should have played in providing counselling services and the need for additional support from ‘trusted adults’ after school life.

Half of young people in the UK sample reported they were still attending education and this is associated with the support they receive whilst living in supported accommodation; a fifth of NL young people were still attending education and 17% of PT. There is an important role to be played by the private business sector. One example is the UK Business Action on Homelessness (BAOH) which supports homeless people through Ready for Work programmes and seeks to develop training programmes with the homeless sector.

The extreme exclusion of the young participants in the CSEYHP project (often from family and community as well as from work and education) makes clear that they present needs in different social domains that need to be addressed in an integrated and sustainable way. For instance, having a job and living at a night shelter while waiting for private housing can lead to regressive trajectories, due to a lack of rest and privacy. The young homeless feel they are trapped and find it hard to see “light at the end of the tunnel”. The project tested the transferability of the Dutch key working methodology called the ‘8 steps model’ used in half of Dutch hostels. This is a strengths-based model building on the abilities of the person and sharing with them every aspect of the action programme that is being devised. The action programme works across eight domains of the life of the person ranging from family through to education and work. This model, introduced in PT, CZ and UK, will continue to be used by agencies in PT and NL, and to adapt existing practice in the UK in at least one agency.

If the EU aims not just at anti-discrimination, but also wishes to promote equality, this calls for a broad array of services and supports which together allow disadvantaged youth to construct their autonomy, independently from social benefits and housing services. It is important that services are designed that positively address the challenges attached to the multiple key transition moments that are part of this life period, from leaving education to living independently.

The findings of the CSEYHP project demonstrate the necessity to promote integrated family support, not only financially, but also working on the relational aspects that constrain school attendance and/or school achievements. The school domain is a privileged field for early intervention and for building, together with disadvantaged youth, the motivation they need to prepare for and enter the labour market and adult life as partners and parents. School can play an important role in diminishing intergenerational poverty and exclusion.

Young people in our total sample, when asked what they would have changed about their pasts, were most likely to respond that they would have liked to have changed their families and/or their educational experiences. Schools have an important role to play here – both an opportunity and a responsibility. This response also underlines the need for the reinforcement of prevention and early intervention measures. Having counselling services at schools is crucial to give young people with problematic family backgrounds an opportunity to voice their problems and seek support to avoid future ruptures (runaway, early school leaving, etc.) and the aggravation of psychological problems. For young people who have already left school, or been excluded from school, it is important that these services also be provided in their communities.

The Platform against poverty initiative of Europe 2020, while targeting the growth of jobs and its distribution, does not include in its scope some of the needs of the young homeless and their families. Data shows clearly that this population lacks economic resources but also health and psychological conditions to dynamically work towards their own inclusion. Member States need to invest in education and employment based on a holistic approach that includes early intervention and ‘trusted adult’ support for other life domains. Further, the target of 20 million fewer people at risk of poverty needs to include the objective to balance the asymmetries in life conditions that exist between and within Member States.

The EU Committee on Culture and Education in its 19th session reflects on the ‘youth divide’: *“The transition of young people to adult life is not always an equal and smooth process: some benefit from new opportunities whilst others experience vulnerability and exclusion.”* The Committee recognizes *“the need to invest in youth work and youth policy to develop a framework capable of delivering programmes and practice which will produce positive outcomes for these young people and develop their self-belief and confidence. The main purpose of these projects and working methods developed by local and regional authorities, by youth NGOs and by young people themselves, is to lift young citizens out of the social exclusion in which they live and to empower them to reach their full potential, as well as to take their proper place and play a meaningful role in society.”* (Committee on Culture and Education on 1 October 2010 - 19th SESSION).

The CSEYHP project findings corroborate this statement and call for support, integrated assistance and partnership touching all domains of the life of young homeless people, Young people who are trying to re-establish themselves need support to get jobs. Young people in CZ could find work but not shelter they could afford; in PT and the UK it was very difficult to find work; apprenticeships through housing associations, NGO’s and employers are important. However, young people in the UK sample living in supported accommodation also were disadvantaged if they sought work as their wages would be too low to pay for their accommodation; therefore they were most likely to be unemployed. Housing and welfare support should not require that young people move out of or refrain from work engagement. A need for consistency within national policies is called for.

INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY IN RELATION TO HOMELESS YOUTH

The young people in the CSEYHP project, both respondents and co-researchers, have fewer opportunities than other young people. They are youth at risk and have often experienced social exclusion from an early age and along their life trajectory. They are currently, or have been in the past, homeless and many depend on welfare benefits and social services provision.

The young homeless are seriously deficient in social capital. Most lack any family support and did not receive early intervention programmes that would have been crucial to prevent or mitigate their current social exclusion situation. In many cases, family support is constrained by the problems in the lives of their parents (mental health issues, drugs or alcohol addictions) or even due to their premature death. Therefore young homeless people require complementary support, but primarily their families also need assistance. Action towards intergenerational solidarity to break social exclusion requires support from other actors of civic society, including mediators, key workers and teachers.

Intergenerational solidarity requires family support and mediation

Young homeless people's life-trajectories show a trend of intergenerational social exclusion, often with family problems at the root of the homelessness problem ("*the crappy dad that I had*"; "*...the absence of my parents, basically the lack of family support*"). When asked about what they would have liked to change, respondents mostly reported they would have liked to change their family and education experience, followed by friends and relationships.

Family relations vary between the respondents in the different countries. The CZ sample had the highest proportion of young homeless people who had lived with one or both birth parents at the age of 12 years: 70% - compared to 63% in UK, 56% in NL and 50% in PT. On the other hand, a third of both NL and CZ samples reported they were hit frequently during childhood. A majority of young people in the PT and UK samples reported a good relationship with at least one parent (67% and 62% respectively) compared with 49% for the NL, and 28% for CZ. Young people in the NL and CZ samples were most likely to report that there were times they would have liked to return home but couldn't (67%, 65%).

For the 216 respondents in the CSEYHP project, intergenerational solidarity is compromised. The problems they faced frequently began at an early age, involving financial and affective issues in their families:

- 22% had parents who have been homeless;
- 47% had parents or caregivers who partially lived on benefits (42% UK and NL; 26% CZ; 23% PT);
- 48% had parents or caregivers who lacked income/work (70% UK; 57% PT; 35% NL; 28% CZ);
- 26% had parents/caregivers with mental health problems and 34% with alcohol problems;
- 48% had parents/caregivers who were verbally aggressive and 43% had parents/caregivers who were physically aggressive.

Half of the respondents said that their parents/caregivers did not have enough income. Consequently, the arguments around money and paying bills were also frequent, affecting the safe and supportive environment children and young people need.

Solidarity between generations: a double-edged sword

Young people in PT and CZ were more likely to report a supportive relationship with grandparents whilst growing up: 24% in PT and 20% in CZ. Grandparents were the second most frequently cited person as their main support person whilst growing up by young people; grandparents were more important than fathers. However, extended family support varied between the four country samples. In the PT sample three quarters of young people (76%) had support from adult relatives plus grandparents or godparents, compared with a minority of young people in the other samples (28% CZ; 24% NL; 19% UK). Grandparents' support in PT was part of an extended family network whilst in CZ grandparent support was more often a substitute for parental support and without backing from other family members.

Our study shows however that young people who had family contacts are not necessarily happier, since conflicts may persist or solidarity can become a double-edged sword, for example when family

relationships oblige a young person to provide financial or caring assistance to a grandparent or parent, compromising the young persons' opportunities to live their own lives. This obligation to provide assistance to an elderly family member, without alternative state infrastructures or home assistance services, can turn a theoretical advantage (of family wellbeing) into a disadvantage. In Portugal we found young people with intact families who became homeless later in life (at the age of 19 or 20), having withdrawn from education in order to provide financial assistance to their family as early as from 12 years of age: *"My parents have been separated since I was 2... I lived with my mother until I was 4/5/6, then I went to live with my granny, who was stuck in a wheelchair... I helped her to wash, I gave her insulin, I gave her food and I went to school... I missed the 3rd class..."* (Portugal)

The long term impact of intergenerational support within the family.

At the time the interviews took place, young people in the CZ sample were the most isolated. The majority of PT young people had multiple attachments to family and/or partners (61%), compared with 30% in NL and 28% in UK, and only 9% in CZ. However, CZ agencies found that young people with a difficult family background could be engaged more easily through working with a trusted adult, than young people who had been in care: *"When we take someone from a very bad family, our success rate is very high. They developed personality structures within the family, it is just necessary to bridge the period so that the kids are safe, finish school, get used to therapy, deal with the issues psychologically and then they live. The success rates are enormous. In case of the kids from institutions it is not the case. The luckier of them had a bad family, but grew up in a normal environment. The longer they are in the institutions, the success rate is lower."* Naděje, NGO worker male, age 57.

State and civil society support for youth whose families fail

Just over a quarter of young people in the CSEYHP sample of 216 young people had some experience in living in social services care (26%). Another quarter would have wanted social services intervention in their families while they were growing up (27%). Overall, 53% had either lived in care or had wanted social services intervention. Further, some young people who had experienced care episodes would have wanted more social services intervention, earlier. In the sample, young people were most likely to have experienced care in NL (49%), followed by CZ (24%). In addition to the 17% in the PT sample who had lived in care, another one third of the Portuguese sample would have wanted social services intervention. Family mediation is a fundamental way of intervention to provide a safety net to disadvantaged young people, but it is not always a possibility. Youth care is essential in cases where families are (temporarily) not functioning, but it does not work effectively in all countries in promoting personal autonomy of children and young people. Investing in this support is central to the prevention of homelessness for this particular youth group.

State and civil society support for young parents

Within the sample, 28% of young people were single parents either mostly with responsibility for their child or children (young mothers) or mostly without responsibility (young fathers). In the cases of these young people intergenerational solidarity with their own children required state support. The young mothers are dependent on state support, aggravated by the lower opportunities they face in the work market, which means a higher vulnerability to crisis along their future life trajectories and an inherited vulnerability for their children – a false case of intergenerational solidarity.

Effective civil society, state and family partnerships

The EU Strategy for Youth establishes the need for 'joined-up policy' for investing and empowering youth. The CSEYHP project found that at the social support level key workers and institutions often lacked the possibilities (financial and time resources) for developing 'joined-up' efforts and effective partnerships, fundamental for delivering integrated or clustered services to disadvantaged youth. This situation is being aggravated by the current economic crisis (*"Many investment plans, talents and*

ideas risk going to waste because of uncertainties, sluggish demand and lack of funding”, Europe 2020)

Whilst still living with their families or in care, young people in our samples would have liked to have a range of services that could have helped prevent their homelessness. In order to provide these services it is necessary to identify young people at risk in order to target early intervention and prevention services towards them. Early intervention methods can be used to divert social ruptures before they reach stronger proportions. An early intervention approach gives Member States the opportunity to diminish social inequalities and break intergenerational poverty, working towards more inclusive and sustainable societies.

Current needs and the role played by trusted adults

The CSEYHP project corroborates the EC guideline of mobilising all actors involved in the life of youth (parents, teachers, social workers, health professionals, youth workers, young people themselves, police and justice, employers...) for preventing social exclusion. Older people as ‘trusted adults’ are a key element, particularly for disadvantaged youth with family problems. Once they were homeless young people in the NL and UK samples were most likely to have a key worker (83% and 74%) compared with less than half in PT and CZ (48% and 45%). Two thirds of the PT and CZ samples who did not have a key worker would like one.

The CSEYHP results have also shown the importance of having “someone to talk to” for nearly half the respondents (45% UK, CZ and NL and 50% PT). This person, a peer, a family member (most often the mother), a social worker, becomes the rope that a young person holds on to and, in the most extreme instances, keeps them alive. *“I promised them I wouldn't do anything crazy, that I'll hold on. That I won't take my own life.... That promise is the only thing keeping me alive now.”* The young people who did not report having ‘a trusted adult’ showed particular points of exclusion: 18 have slept rough; 12 have squatted; 13 have used a night shelter; 16 long term care; 22 have run away at least for 1 night; and 19 find their life “mostly unsettled”. This is where solidarity between generations – with or without family relationships – is extremely valuable.

Overall, the extreme exclusion of the young participants in the CSEYHP project makes clear that they present needs in different social domains that need to be addressed in an integrated and sustainable way. This goal calls not only for compensatory services, but all-encompassing assistance allowing disadvantaged youth to construct their autonomy independently from benefits and housing services. It is important that services are designed addressing the challenges attached to the multiple key transition moments that are part of this life period, from leaving education to living independently, to raising the future generation of young people.

It is necessary to break intergenerational poverty and social exclusion of young homeless people in several ways: by supporting families (financially and through mediation); promoting the autonomy through investing in the education of the youngest and assisting young people in schools and other social environments to overcome formal and informal exclusions; and to develop motivation with the support of older role models and effective partnerships. Targeting on growth and jobs will leave out of range some of the young homeless families. Data shows that this population lacks economic resources but also health and psychological conditions to actively look for their own inclusion.

The Europe 2020 initiatives, particularly “Youth on the move”, indicates that there is still much to do to promote equality and reduce intergenerational poverty. The numbers of jobless households and the expansion of a so-called “new poverty” significantly increase social support expenses. The construction of effective partnerships based on mutual trust between the generations can contribute to a safe environment for young people at risk to grow up and become self-sufficient and responsible adults who will in their turn be able to support others.

To achieve intergeneration solidarity for young homeless people calls for a proactive involvement of society, from local civil society and communities, to the European Commission. Families are only one part of it. Otherwise social inequality will only grow: *“The transition of young people to adult life is not always an equal and smooth process: some benefit from new opportunities whilst others experience vulnerability and exclusion. ... Hence the need to invest in youth work and youth policy to develop a framework capable of delivering programmes and practice which will produce positive outcomes for these young people and develop their self-belief and confidence. ... lift young citizens out of the social exclusion in which they live and to empower them to reach their full potential, as well as to take their proper place and play a meaningful role in society.”* (Committee on Culture and Education on 1 October 2010 - 19th SESSION).

The risk factors in the life trajectories of young homeless people are clearly identifiable. The EU Youth Strategy actions for preventing social exclusion have to be reinforced, along with holistic key working methods and active inclusion of those in need of support. Young homeless people have to be involved, even if this is not always easy, into shaping their own future. Member States should invest in social policy and support for families, especially when intergenerational solidarity within the family is compromised.

Potential impact

What does the CSEYHP project add to the knowledge base on youth homelessness? Does research make a difference?

In CZ the project established the presence of youth homelessness by making visible young homeless people who were reluctant to use available services largely targeted at older homeless people. It demonstrated that there were no specific services tackling youth homelessness in CZ and a total neglect of the specific needs of this group. It increased academic knowledge about the tools for in-depth research with the young homeless group.

Similarly in PT the CSEYHP project alerted the administrative services to the fact that youth homelessness is invisible and out of the reach of administrative services which target their efforts on the consequences of homelessness for young people rather than on the causes of youth homelessness and particular risk situations. In PT CSEYHP was particularly important in understanding the inter-play of risk factors and the path of homelessness for young people, which is essential for an early intervention strategy and prompt intervention once a young person is homeless.

In the Netherlands the project contributed in various ways to answer questions. CSEYHP presented a more detailed insight into who homeless youth are. Out of the diverse sample different profiles emerged: a street group, a criminal group, a women's shelter group, a support group and a refugee group. Not only did we distinguish different groups but because of the life trajectory approach we could also distinguish different pathways into homelessness of these groups. These differences give a detailed picture of the diversity of risk factors that lead to social exclusion of young homeless people. This may in turn be helpful in offering tailor-made social services for reinsertion. On the other hand some resemblances among the different groups are obvious. This is helpful in keeping track of the mainline of social interventions.

Combating youth homelessness contributed to insight on the situation of young homeless illegal refugees in The Netherlands. This group experiences serious social exclusion from Dutch society, esp. after 18 when they lose their right for education. No matter what welfare state arrangements or social services are available, they have to survive without any formal right to support. In the past decade young illegal persons in the Netherlands have been cut off from participating in society quite efficiently. In general homeless youth in The Netherlands can be divided into those oriented on living in the street and those oriented on support services. Women and men are spread unequally over these categories. Women mainly live in shelters, men are overrepresented in street-orientation. Those oriented on the street have either more mental problems or problems because of criminality. It seems obvious that different approaches are needed to street-oriented and non street-oriented groups and within these approaches there must be room for specific problems.

Because of the involvement of co-researchers and the life-trajectory approach respondents looked back on their life in detail. It is clear that quite often problems start in the early childhood. Part of the children have been taken into care since an early age. This doesn't necessarily mean that their lives improve, on the contrary. Care has often been seen as depraving, unsafe and unstable. The interviewees even blame the care organization for their bad situation then and now. Research should focus on the current situation of early childhood care. What can be done to prevent children becoming homeless because of their having been in care?

In general most of the respondents look back on their lives in grief and anger. If they don't blame the care organizations for messing up their lives, they point at several points in the past in which they could have had effective help. For example by helping their parents with medication or relatively low standard social-economic support. Looking back, young homeless people in the Netherlands did not perceive the Netherlands as a society with general or generous welfare state provisions.

The Dutch youth homeless problem is based very much in early childhood. The problems respondents face today were caused in the past and initiated a chain of disadvantages in housing, education and work, which still has an impact on their lives. Although the Dutch welfare state enables a lot of social services, especially compared to CZ, PT and some respects even UK, these could not solve the problems of youth becoming homeless. Homeless youth form a relatively small group within Dutch society. Should we accept this phenomenon? Or do we have to change welfare state arrangements and social services to intervene effectively in early childhood. This question has been brought up in

the national workshops in the Netherlands. The CSEYHP project helped to bring back the topic of prevention in early childhood into the national discussion on youth homelessness.

Another, more positive insight is the opinion of the respondents on the help they are offered at present. Quite a lot of them have a key worker. The support of those key workers is valued very positively, especially the personal approach of most key workers. Of course this is not a representative opinion because the Dutch respondents were found within organizations with key-workers and much less in the street. Still respondents make distinctions between the lack of help in the past and the way they are supported now. One might say that prevention is never too late. The respondents are still young and able to reinsert into society. Compared to for instance CZ and PT the Dutch welfare state offers room for young homeless to make a new start in education, employment and a stable place to stay.

Youth homelessness in The Netherlands is a relatively small problem. It is hard to point at exactly these risk factors that cause the problem or prevent the solution of the problem. Why don't welfare arrangements, youth care and social services prevent young people from becoming homelessness? To get a clearer picture clear we need more information on:

- different subgroups
- counterproductive youth care: places and situations that generate youth homelessness (often unintended)
- early prevention that makes a difference in reinsertion

Combating youth homelessness contributed to answer the question, but further research is needed.

For the UK there were three areas of knowledge development. One was the inclusion of young migrants by means of a quota sample. From our key respondent interviews it was apparent that adults working with young homeless people found young asylum seekers and refugees more motivated to continue in education and also likely to come from a better family background than young people born in the UK. This was confirmed in some cases of non-EU migrants to the UK who reported aspirations towards careers as social workers and teachers. What was previously unknown was the degree to which some young homeless people were fleeing religious persecution as well as war – amongst our 16 young migrants, 5 were Eritrean/ Ethiopian from the Pentecostal religion. Their life trajectories showed them to be subject to renewed state persecution because of their religion.

In the total sample for all four countries there were 60 young migrants - 11 from EU countries and 49 from non-EU countries. Whilst many non-EU migrants kept in touch with their families and described better family backgrounds than those born in the four countries the EU migrants described coming from even more difficult families and had low aspirations. The EU migrants who were older, male, poor childhoods and poor relationships with 2 or 1 parent, less support, not religious, early school leavers and had low aspirations. The non-EU migrants were younger, equally male and female, half had good or happy childhoods (versus 27% of those born in the country of interview), high parent resilience, and four fifths were religious. Many had left school early but had higher aspirations for university or professional employment. One third of non-EU migrants had never had a job but this was often associated with legal controls on their work.

Future studies of migrant homelessness need to look at people migrating between EU countries as well as from non-EU countries.

The second area of knowledge for the UK that was raised by key respondents and tracked through life trajectories was the importance of the region in which the young person was raised. In the UK some young people were homeless through involvement with gangs or being targeted by gangs in their local area. Other UK young homeless people had been raised in areas in which there was a concentration of workless households and key respondents reported having to raise aspirations and challenge low aspirations among young people. In PT some young homeless people were living in areas of social housing that had been constructed to replace shanty housing prior to the accession of Portugal to the EU.

A third area was the inclusion of young mothers in the homeless study specifically in both PT and UK. Within the UK young mothers group there was one case where the young mother had herself been born in supported accommodation. In PT some young mothers were living with their child in one room within a family home whilst in the UK all young mothers were interviewed in social housing. In the total sample for all four countries a quarter of young women were mothers (with responsibility for one or more children) and a quarter of men were young fathers (mostly without responsibility for children). In

future studies of youth homelessness it is important not to assume that young people who appear to be 'single' homeless are in fact single homeless – their domestic and parenting situation should be inquired into.

A fourth area that confirmed existing knowledge rather than develop new knowledge, was that a lesser proportion of young homeless people in the UK had a care background in this study than in previous studies (16% versus up to 25% - 33% previously). The reason for this change is the addition to UK homeless legislation in 2002 which made care leavers one of the priority need groups who must be accepted as homeless and for whom local authority housing departments have a duty to assist in being re-housed. Further legislation in 2005 placed long term responsibility for successful and supported transitions with social service departments. This demonstrates the potential for legislation to transform the life chances for young people from care. Other research in the UK has found that legislation to ensure supported pathways has made a real difference for care leavers accessing and using housing services (Simon, 2008). This finding could be useful for services in NL, considering that half of the NL sample in the CSEYHP study had a care background.

▪ **Research does make a difference**

In CZ the research into youth homelessness was pioneering. Currently the reports of this project are the only source of easily available information on previous research, and on young homeless people's attitudes towards their lives, needs and hopes. The project involved co-researchers and opened the path for their social integration (one of the co-researchers is now at college). The media impact of the research which partly coincided with the European Year of Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion was important because it inspired interest in youth homelessness. The research has also been suggested to social workers and NGOs as a basis for building their case for lobbying to obtain more financial resources for their work with young homeless people.

In NL youth homelessness is a much debated topic. Society finds it difficult to accept that youth homelessness exists in a relatively wealthy country which puts quite a lot of effort in combating this social problem. Public opinion towards homeless young persons is positive in general. Their problems are acknowledged. Youth care and other social services try to tackle the problem, but aren't able to dispose of it. Organizations and professionals directly involved participate in a lively and ongoing discussion on how to improve their work. The CSEYHP project has played a part in this discussion in the past three years. Because of the slightly different scientific approach compared to earlier research and because of the international comparison CSEYHP attracted attention from policy-makers as well as from organizations in the field. Especially the comparison with UK served as a mirror for the Dutch situation. The research results pointed at the need for early intervention. The Early Intervention Model developed in the UK is considered very promising for the Dutch situation. Because of the many already existing services it is hard to implement the model fully in The Netherlands. But some organizations adopted important parts of the model into their daily practice and MOVISIE promotes the model as a way to effectively prevent future youth homelessness at least partly. The need for early prevention and the effective tools of the Early Intervention Model were brought to the attention of the work field and the general audience by means of numerous articles in the Dutch press. The Early Intervention Model has been the central theme in a well attended national workshop. The two main Dutch ministries involved in this subject matter attended the workshops too. One of the biggest public television stations in the Netherlands broadcast a programme on the importance of early intervention to prevent young homeless from becoming homeless. The CSEYHP project triggered the production of the programme and several co-researchers and interviewees contributed.

In The Netherlands the density of social services focusing on youth at risk is high. Youth care and other facilities overlap and complement each other. There is little knowledge on what really works: which interventions or instruments really make a difference for which target group under which circumstances. NL might learn from UK in using and creating more evidence based working methods, for example the evidence based risk assessment for young runaways developed within the Early interventions model.

In Portugal the project faced challenges specifically around the scarcity of homelessness services provision, in particular for the youth group. In PT services are strictly separated between child and youth services (up to 18 years old) and adulthood support (for those over 18 years old). An essential message in terms of methodologies resulted: care services are needed which address the specific needs of young homeless and which are able to involve them actively in the services that target them.

In the 1st National Workshop in Portugal, in the presence of one of the coordinators of the National Strategy for the Integration of Homeless People, a key policy intention was voiced: *Include youth homelessness under the Homelessness Strategy, despite being a field of intervention allocated to the Commissions for the Protection of Children and Young People.*

Several recommendations regarding service provision and key working that work specifically in the Portuguese context, were drawn from this research:

- Work in partnership and better distribute resources, which in Portugal are very centralized. Services are still not included in the community and are not aware or prepared to work with culturally diverse clients. Institutional rivalry, instead of cooperation, hinders the ability of services to provide integrated responses for their clients.
- Create more temporary housing facilities for transition for those young people who live most of their lives in care;
- Introduce family mediation to manage family conflicts and early intervention of homelessness;
- Improvements have to be made in key workers' attitude, in terms of listening to the young people they accompany and really taking their views into account. At the moment key workers don't have tailor made solutions for young people at risk or homeless and just one or two insufficient responses, the same for everyone;
- Frequently prolonged delays in the courts' decisions have a negative impact on the clients' inclusion processes, as key workers manage to make arrangements for example to find a job or to find accommodation but everything in the young person's life is blocked until the court issues a decision on their case and they often lose opportunities;

Around these issues, the following recommendations were suggested:

- To establish regular social workers' team meetings focusing on youth homelessness, following the example of the already existing meeting of street work teams supporting homeless people;
- To work further towards a culture of institutional cooperation and networking.

In the UK despite many years of research it became apparent that it is important to constantly re-emphasise what is already known and also what works. In the UK members of local authority social work departments who attended the National Workshops did so because they wished to find out about both key working methods and early intervention methods - staff change, projects change, people forget. In the CSEYHP project as a whole young people reported that it would have made a difference in their childhoods if they had Social Service intervention (highest in NL at 59% of the sample versus 42% overall), counseling (50% NL versus 40% overall), education support (highest in PT, 33%, versus 28% overall) and family mediation (highest in UK at 37% versus 23% overall, but PT very low at 4%). However 17% of PT young people now wanted mediation.

The second set of issues focuses on the impact research has on the target groups. Has it actually reached out to young homeless people?

The CSEYHP project did not aim to directly change and improve the situation of young homeless people. Nevertheless there have been impacts. The co-researchers in general commented positively on the impact that their participation in the project had on their lives and on their self-image and self-esteem. It is not possible to prove that CSEYHP has directly changed anything for the better for the target group involved in the project or otherwise, but it did reach out to young homeless people.

The research has reached different groups of young people and their housing paths. The definition of homelessness included cases of current rough sleeping, not necessarily at the moment of the survey but close to that time. Empirical research done so far focuses largely on the chronic situations instead of the more mobile cases. In spite of the diversity of national housing situations in the partner countries, we have effectively understood the housing paths of different situations of young people in the four countries.

Due to the lack of specific housing support services for young homeless, in Portugal the representation of the "homeless at home", meaning people that confess to living situations of loneliness, abandoning school to take care of an elderly family member, wanting to move out but not being economically able to, is more significant. Also there are among the interviewees more that have experienced family homelessness and are now in social housing. It is clear that unemployment and

the lack of economic resources keeps young people from finding independence. For those without family network support the risks of homelessness are higher.

The situations of young people who were in child care and are now in move-on clustered apartments are particularly important in order to alert Member States to the need for continuous counseling and settlement support services, both for post-institutionalized youth and homeless youth getting off the streets, particularly if the episode of homelessness was a long one.

In PT the situation of the undocumented is also of great concern since young homeless people without documents are cut off from support services and blocked until they are able to sort out their situation. It was alleged by key workers that embassies should play a more active role in providing the necessary documents from their home countries that are necessary for legalization (particularly the necessary criminal record checks). The PT sample included young people who initially came to the country under health protocol support, or who came as economic migrants, and also the paradox case of second generation immigrants who were also asked to provide documents to prove their lack of a criminal record in their 'home' country.

It is only by understanding country specificities that effective early intervention strategies to address these particular hidden cases, can be implemented. Moreover, by looking at the young disadvantaged life trajectories it is also possible to establish which social vulnerabilities accumulate risk and compromise reinsertion, creating situations of perpetual 'benefit dependency' which in turn impact negatively on the sustainability of social security services.

These findings alert to the danger of a two speed Europe and a two speed youth development within countries. Asymmetries persist both within countries and between countries, threatening full achievement of the Europe 2020 goals.

In CZ it is too early to state if there has been some real impact on the lives of this group. The project has, however, increased the visibility of young homeless people to both NGOs working with adult homelessness and to local and state agencies. As already mentioned some possible impact lies in the use of the research findings to lobby for improvements for services for young homeless people, including the possibility of engaging the young people themselves in those improvements.

▪ **Targeting and Cost Effectiveness**

As well as creating pathways for young people living in care (as above) it is also important to work with young people facing difficulties in their family home. In the UK during interviews for the DVD 'Early Intervention Methods in the UK' it became apparent that several developments were taking place in these methods of working that needed to be recorded:

- Family mediation services were training young people to deal with conflict in the family even when their parents were not present at any mediation process. This has been described as the difference between 'off-line' mediation (no parent present) and 'on-line' mediation (a parent present). This training could take place through individual counseling or during lessons in schools that provided conflict resolution training in general.
- Conflict resolution training, developed for family mediation, was being used to train young people to deal with gangs and bullying in their school and in their local area. These lessons were taking place in schools but delivered in some cases by a homeless mediation worker.
- Local authorities were funding homeless agencies to deliver lessons on homelessness which warned young people about the costs and consequences of leaving home early at age 16 years or thereabouts. At the end of these sessions young people who wanted individual guidance were spoken to – and also information on where to receive help was given out.
- 'Road' sessions on homelessness were held on particular estates in local areas.
- The 'Night-Stop' service which provided volunteer hosts for 2-3 nights when a young person was immediately homeless and no supported housing bed available, had expanded to include some hosts who would take a young person for some weeks (as a volunteer) or for 3 months (as a paid host).

Early intervention methods need not be expensive. All the Early Intervention Services that were interviewed in the UK were targeting particular schools or particular groups of young people. In relation to Birmingham for example (a city of 1 million inhabitants), secondary schools with high numbers of

young people at risk (either through school exclusion or running away or being in an area with high homeless applications from young people) were receiving lessons from St Basils. The Family Mediation Service run by St Basils in Birmingham received referrals from Social Services and Housing Services who redirected young people applied as homeless to different local area housing teams. In London the mediation service of DePaul UK was working with four local Boroughs in identified schools – again where particular risk factors were evident. Night Stop services were being provided by different charities in different locations in the UK that did not have a developed supported housing system in order to provide back-up accommodation. It is therefore apparent that early intervention is targeted to particular areas and/or particular schools and is therefore not a costly intervention.

Early intervention methods are also important for the safety of the young person. The CSEYHP research included looking at the risk of homelessness for young people. Among several shared risk factors we found that in all four countries there were significantly high numbers of young people running away frequently from their homes. In the UK this was nearly half of the sample. This strongly suggests an important opportunity where support can be targeted to make an impact earlier to prevent youth homelessness.

Thirdly, what has the impact of the project been in the countries involved in the research project, both at national and at local levels?

Portugal

The CSEYHP project, if not a pioneer, is one of the first researches that took place in Portugal that use the collaboration of ex-homeless youth. Also, the fact that the participation of the young homeless interviewees was financially remunerated has come to establish innovative and demanding efforts in terms of research philosophy and administration aspects.

The CSEYHP project was particularly relevant in Portugal to alert policy makers and key workers to the relevance of participatory methodologies, where clients are not only targets but also agents for designing and contributing to their own reinsertion, in the context of youth homelessness services. The young people in situations of housing deprivation in Portugal, between 18 and 26 years old, do not have specific social support services but only those available for adults, which negatively impacts on their reinsertion trajectories. For instance, in night shelters they do not have their own space for studying or specific support for their professional expectations.

The fact that we looked at homelessness trajectories was relevant to understand the dynamics of housing solutions among young people and the puzzle of arrangements, which make this a particular mobile group and more challenging to reach. Furthermore, their homelessness periods are more usually off and on situations, implying a revision of the concepts of transitional and chronic homelessness. Transitional homelessness is not a short period of crisis after leaving the parental home, as the representation of lack of family support and child care cases prove. The CSEYHP project was particularly persistent in alerting to the issue of intergenerational social exclusion and the need for family support, which was the topic of one of the project policy briefs.

Of particular relevance were the moments when co-researchers and key workers were brought together to discuss, on an equal basis, the methodologies of reinsertion services. Our particular aim was to provide a pro-active perspective and new bridges for communication. After the national workshops the co-researchers were invited by social services providers to participate in future actions and workshops. Also at the early intervention level, meaning the work of dissemination of information done at schools in the last phase of testing the models, created a basis for future action.

Czech Republic

The CSEYHP project was relevant for the Czech situation on many levels and in several ways. First, it was a pioneer research of the phenomenon of youth homelessness in the Czech Republic. To our knowledge this is the first research project targeting specifically youth homeless persons, not only in the sense of getting in touch and engaging in in-depth conversation with them but also by engaging

experts, studying and contextualizing relevant legislation and providing a comprehensive picture of the state of the art and research done so far.

Secondly, it was the first such research of the target group involving co-researchers who had experienced a similar situation and received training within the project, which they perceived as increasing their capabilities and personal growth in addition to financial remuneration and possibility to cooperate with professional researchers.

In the third place it engaged the community of social workers and agencies dealing with homelessness and turned their attention to somewhat neglected specificities of the youth homelessness phenomenon. Some of the research results were discussed personally with the Head of the Preventive Programmes Department of the Ministry of Interior and increased visibility of the target group, especially concerning the lack of tailor-made services for this specific group of young homeless people. Engaging these two groups of stakeholders in our view means that the project already had some effect both on policy makers and grassroots organizations but more potential lies in further dissemination, which is under way through translation of the findings into Czech and publishing articles in local journals.

The Netherlands

In The Netherlands it was quite difficult to find respondents for the research project. Although most homeless youth reside in social services and sleeping rough is an exception, it took a long time to convince organizations and homeless youth to participate, even if they knew about the participation of co-researchers. Young homeless people wondered what the CSEYHP project would be able to contribute to their personal and societal situation. Their suspicions were understandable. In a country with quite a dense network of social services, researchers have to be modest about the impact. Indirectly the target groups might be served by the wide dissemination of results and recommendations. The participation of co-researchers as well as the research approach gave room to the respondents to demonstrate the complete picture and perspective of homeless youth in the Netherlands. Co-researchers acknowledged the results and recommendations and the recommendations will be part of a ongoing societal and political discussion. Only the future may tell whether there will be more concrete results in improving the situation of young homeless persons in The Netherlands.

At least one point of political interest has been brought to attention in the research project. Young illegal or undocumented homeless persons are socially excluded in every respect. By stating their case this issue hopefully will be raised again on the political agenda, both nationally and at European level.

United Kingdom

In the UK the impact of the project has been more at the local and agency level than at the national level. In the UK the process of testing the Eight Steps Model was useful in order to compare this model with the model used by many agencies and promoted by Homeless Link: the Outcomes Star. The two agencies that tested the model thought that the Outcomes Star could be improved by an increased emphasis on the homeless person's own strengths, i.e. a positive strength based model as is incorporated in the Eight Steps Model. One of the agencies that tested the Eight Steps Model worked with young mothers. As a consequence it was found in the UK testing period that the model should be changed to include a focus on the child as well. The focus of the young mothers is on their child and their future provision for that child as much, or more so, than on their own future and situation.

Observation of key working methods in the UK also reaffirmed the difficulties facing key workers in supported accommodation agencies who are encouraging the young people they work with to be committed and engaged in education but must discourage them from full time employment as the wages they receive would be insufficient for them to pay for their hostel place. The balancing of welfare payments and support versus engagement in work is a major area of concern in the UK which could be addressed if rent support payments would be gentle tapering off when young homeless people first went to work but still they continued to require supported accommodation.

▪ **The transferability of the early intervention models to CZ and PT**

The Eight-steps Model and the Early Intervention Model have a serious potential in Portugal. The former by alerting to the need of a holistic approach, more than instrumental software support, and the latter for bringing examples of early intervention. The discussion with the professionals about this testing experience have highlighted that Portugal does not have family mediation knowledge, as in the UK, but more of a conflict management approach that is not sustainable.

Testing has demonstrated the value of jointly developing an assessment of needs, giving a voice both to clients and key workers. Further steps need to be taken to incorporate empowerment of clients.

Additional field research among the homeless youth population should take place in the Czech Republic to obtain a more generalized picture. The results need to be tested on a wider sample, targeting the question of how social innovation can be introduced in the practice of social work with young homeless people in all four countries, but particularly in the Czech Republic. More testing is necessary for the Eight-Steps Model and the Early Intervention Model, with extensive presentations of the models which show to be promising after first testing. Together with this transformation of the models of social work, it is necessary to tackle in future research the question of how to target a wider population in awareness raising on this question, not only in the sense of making the issue more visible but also less stigmatizing.

The Eight-Steps Model and the Early Intervention Model can be transferred more vigorously to the Czech Republic under conditions stated in the project: a better IT infrastructure, service provision focusing more on long-term work as opposed to ad hoc crisis work, legislation which enables sharing information about clients, more support to try socially innovative approaches (such as Nightstop in the UK) and less pressure on young people to be put into institutions but instead trying to work with them in their natural social environment, which both models support.

MESSAGE FOR THE FUTURE

When the CSEYHP project began in 2008 rates of youth unemployment were more similar than in 2011. In 2011 (Jan Eurostat) youth unemployment in NL is 7.9% whilst it is 20% in the UK. Across the EU the average unemployment for those aged 25 years and over is 8.3% whilst for youth it is 20.4%. Only in Germany and the Netherlands is youth unemployment below 8%, in 18 countries it is above 20% and in 6 countries above 30%. In all member states youth unemployment is at least double the rate of adult unemployment. In the last six months youth unemployment has increased in six member states including the UK. Young people in most member states are therefore facing a future that has greater difficulties than even the age group that is 5-10 years older.

The response of member states to the current economic situation is to cut back on welfare payments and services. In the UK support payments that helped young people aged 16 years plus stay in education have been reduced from covering 45% of 16-19 year olds to covering 15%. The two most comprehensive (not necessarily generous) welfare regimes in our study – NL and UK – face similar restrictions. Support payments for unemployed youth are dependant on proof that they have applied for jobs and disabled young people face new regulations when applying for income support and assistance. In NL there are discussions on whether household income should be combined for all those in the household including youth. In the UK there are discussions on combining all welfare payments, including rent support, into one weekly payment. Already new regulations are being brought in that restrict rent support for those aged up to 34 years in the UK to the rent of a room in a shared house (previously the limit was 25 years) and limits for the rent on each type of housing. Also in the UK funding cuts have made the provision of services more difficult with 77% of accommodation services having no empty beds on an average night and 26% having to turn homeless people away because they are full (SNAP survey available at www.homelesslink.org)

It is notable that in our survey many young homeless people interviewed in the UK and NL could not answer the question as to whether their parents had been homeless in the past. This is because both countries have used their social housing to allow people to avoid homelessness. In both NL and UK social housing provision and supported accommodation may have prevented both the stigmatization of homelessness and the traumatic experience of homelessness in the lives of young people as children. This may change in the future as social housing has become increasingly difficult to obtain through allocation and private rental solutions are restricted by the amount of rent that the government will subsidize.

Austerity measures, which are under way in the CZ have already or will soon affect many vulnerable groups including services provided to homeless population (therefore affecting young homeless people). There are cuts in financial support for services provision such as help to parents of children with special needs, support for single parents (vast majority of them mothers), decrease in some benefits such as parental leave, decrease of number of pre-school facilities, decrease in unemployment benefits or conditioning them with public work, re-training, etc. However, the reform has not been fully implemented yet, therefore we can only speculate that the less robust social system will lead to deterioration of the position of young people at risk of homelessness or homeless.

In terms of the current economic and social context, several PT social workers shared their experience that social services and resources are already being cut down and their deep worries about the likelihood of further budget measures to take place, this having surely a great negative impact on such a vulnerable population. Moreover, these cuts are happening exactly when the need for support is greater, as families are experiencing benefit cuts, cut-downs in the services provided and increasing difficulties in finding or keeping their jobs. To this regard, it needs to be made very clear that changing working methods is not necessarily more expensive and that sustainability increases when clients are actively involved.

The CSEYHP project has an impact on the European level. It contributes a comparative dimension and hence can be used to share knowledge about other countries along the same lines as the CSEYHP project outlined. This will reveal similarities and differences both in initial conditions of homelessness and wider socio-economic indicators. As a follow-up activity the EU will have to consider if and to what extent a common EU policy in this matter would be possible and where national policies would be incrementally beneficial to the position of young people at risk of homelessness or already homeless.

Main dissemination activities

Website and logo

The project has been supported with a logo and a website on which progress reports and publications were published. In addition, six digital project newsletters have been distributed throughout the three year period. These newsletters are also still available on the project website. Pages have been added to the website to accommodate the project results and other information materials, so that now there are pages to introduce the project, an overview of the partners, the publications published during the project, the newsletters, and a page on the final conference.

The project partners linked their organisations' websites to the project website and provide further information in their country's languages on their own websites.

Free publicity

The project generated a great deal of interest and – as a consequence – a great deal of free publicity aimed at a general audience. In the Netherlands frequent articles and interviews were published in regional and local newspapers, following the distribution of press releases on interesting project findings. In addition a Dutch public television station broadcast an item on the project in which they interviewed a co-researcher and several project interview respondents. Similar activities have taken place in the other partner countries.

National policy

During the project period the partners in the four countries each hosted two national workshops, one in March 2010 and one in February/March 2011. These national workshops were used to discuss the project objectives and findings with key workers and national policy makers. In total, approximately 400 people participated in the national workshops. The national reports, and later thematic reports, were sent to significant representatives of local and national authorities in their countries by the partners.

European policy

FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless, is an umbrella of not-for-profit organisations which participate in or contribute to the fight against homelessness in Europe. It is the only major European network that focuses exclusively on homelessness at European level. We have actively engaged with FEANTSA as a prime channel for the distribution of our project findings and related activities. We have participated in several events related to our project, including European Research Conferences and European conferences. One article on the project development has been published in FEANTSA's Homeless in Europe magazine in autumn 2010. An article by two of the project researchers has been peer reviewed and accepted for publication in the next edition of the European Journal on Homelessness. Another article will be written this summer by three researchers for the European Journal of Social Work

In addition, we participated in several meetings of the youth and social exclusion related projects in the 7th Framework Programme, invited by our project officer at DG Research, and in a number of seminars hosted by fellow 7th Framework Programme youth projects.

We received active help of DG Research to engage in discussion with other DG's of the European Commission and to influence policy makers at European levels during the final international conference at the end of the project in April 2011. The final conference was a key instrument to inform key researchers and policy makers.

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