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Spain

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Summary

The Comprehensive National Strategy for Homelessness 2015-2020 (hereafter ENI-PSH 2015-2020) is the primary instrument for fighting homelessness at the state level, and is linked to the operational categories of the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA's) European Typology on Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS) for the analysis of people without a house or roof over their heads. Homelessness in insecure and inadequate housing is also addressed within broader policies and programmes related to combating social exclusion and housing exclusion. The different sources of information used here – National Statistics Institute 2005 and 2012 surveys, ENI-PSH 2015-2020 estimates, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), regional strategies and municipal counts of homeless people – indicate that the total number of homeless people without a house or a roof over their head ranges from 33,000 to 40,000. This number has increased over the past decade, due both to the economic shortcomings associated with the crisis and to relational or psychosocial deprivation. This increase has taken place primarily in relation to people living in centres for the homeless, while the number of people living on the streets has dropped, according to municipal counts. The socio-demographic profile of the homeless population in Spain in 2012 (latest available survey) is typically a male, aged 42.7 years, with a low-middle educational level and no work activity. Foreign nationals accounted for almost half of the total. The average duration of homelessness increased throughout the period 2011-2015.

As regards persons in situations of insecure and inadequate housing, four out of 100 households suffer from housing insecurity, and seven out of 100 households suffer from housing inadequacies.

Policies aimed at combating homelessness and insecure housing have so far been generally oriented by the 2013-2016 National Action Plan on social inclusion (NAP/inclusion), even though competence for these policies lies with the Autonomous Communities (general policy against housing exclusion) and the municipalities (fight against homelessness).

The new framework of action is established by the National Housing Plan 2018-2021, which includes measures to combat housing exclusion, and the ENI-PSH 2015-2020, which targets those people with no house or roof over their head. The latter strategy has not yet been implemented, and the opportunity to have a national policy has thus been lost. No action plan has been approved. The only positive effect of this strategy has been the approval of regional and local plans to combat homelessness.

Municipal policies to deal with homelessness are increasingly designed using the Housing First approach; the Third Sector of Social Action (TSSA) is contributing to the dissemination of this approach. Its effectiveness is not yet known, as it is still in the phase of experimentation and innovation.

In their present form, the policies to combat housing exclusion and homelessness have shortcomings that hamper their effectiveness: the absence of a common methodology for the diagnosis of homelessness; the limited interrelation between the National Housing Plan 2018-2021 and the ENI-PSH 2015-2020; the low involvement of the housing and health departments in the fight against homelessness; strategies for social and labour inclusion that are not adapted to the specific situation of homeless people; and action programmes in which centres for the homeless remain the most important social service, to the detriment of the concurrent search for housing and employment.

The key policy challenges for the coming years are as follows: to activate the current ENI-PSH 2015-2020 – or, better still, to design a new strategy with sufficient financial and institutional support; to improve coordination between central, regional and local government; to improve the coordination of housing, health and social services departments in order to achieve effective advances in social integration; to strengthen cooperation within the TSSA; and to enhance the employment of homeless persons

through the social economy, as a preliminary step to their integration into the mainstream labour market.

1 The nature and extent of homelessness and housing exclusion

The Comprehensive National Strategy for Homelessness 2015-2020¹ (hereinafter ENI-PSH 2015-2020) (MSSI, 2015) is the first state-level instrument to address the situation of homelessness throughout the national territory. The **definition** of homelessness used in the ENI-PSH 2015-2020 is based on FEANTSA ETHOS. The ETHOS Light categories included in the definition used in the ENI-PSH are operational categories 1-4 (see Table A1 in the Annex) – i.e. people who live on the streets or in alternative centres because of their homelessness. The strategy does not take account of the other two criteria of ETHOS Light – insecure and inadequate housing. In Spain, these aspects of housing exclusion are often addressed within broader policies related to the fight against social exclusion and housing exclusion (see Section 2).

The latest national-level **data** available on homeless persons come from the 2012 Homeless Persons Survey conducted by the National Statistics Institute (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística* – INE) (see Table A2 in the Annex).² According to this survey, a total of 22,938 homeless persons received support in care centres,³ representing an increase of 4.7% over the previous survey, carried out in 2005,⁴ which estimated 21,900 persons. This source of information did not survey those who had not attended centres for the homeless, and so some cities carry out their own nocturnal counts of people who are not spending the night in a care centre.⁵ Taking into account the data from the 2012 Survey and extrapolating the nocturnal counts to the state as a whole, the ENI-PSH 2015-2020 estimated that in 2014 the total number of homeless people in Spain (without a house or a roof) could have been around 33,000 (ENI-PSH 2015-2020; Rodríguez Cabrero and Marbán, 2016). Caritas estimates that they are currently accompanying and caring for approximately 40,000 homeless people in Spain.

Subsequent to the approval of the ENI-PSH 2015-2020, regions such as the Basque Country⁶ and some cities such as Madrid,⁷ Barcelona,⁸ Zaragoza⁹ and Las Palmas de Gran Canarias¹⁰ have developed their own plans and strategies for homeless people, all within the framework established by the ENI-PSH 2015-2020. The cities of Madrid, Barcelona, Zaragoza and the capitals of the Basque Country have also updated the counts of homeless people, and an increasing number of cities (such as Alicante, Mallorca, Las Palmas) and regions (Galicia)¹¹ are preparing new counts. In general, the number of homeless people is increasing in all counts (by 25% in Madrid between 2016 and 2018; 3.3% in Zaragoza between 2012 and 2016; 1.6% in Barcelona between 2013 and 2017; and 9.4% in the Basque Country between 2014 and 2016). In all but Madrid, the proportion of people sleeping on the street has decreased (by 34% in Zaragoza, 30%

¹ Available at: <http://bit.ly/2UBndsC>

² Available at: <http://bit.ly/2UBnsUy>

³ This figure has two limitations: it does not reflect the consequences of the crisis after 2012, and those homeless persons who did not attend care centres for the homeless were not surveyed.

⁴ Press release, INE, <http://www.ine.es/prensa/np398.pdf>

⁵ In the city of Madrid, 1,905 homeless people were identified in 2014 (Muñoz et al., 2014); 455 in Zaragoza in 2012 (Cabrera, 2012); 2,933 in Barcelona in 2013 (Sales, 2013); and 1,836 in the three capitals of the Basque Country in 2014 (Fundación Eguía-Careaga, 2015).

⁶ Basque Strategy for Homeless People, 2018-2021, <http://bit.ly/2PpBffY>

⁷ Municipal Strategy for Homelessness Prevention and Care, 2015-2020, <http://bit.ly/2Dw0nge> The Madrid region has also drawn up a Plan for the Inclusion of Homeless People, 2016-2021, <http://bit.ly/2GtATB5>

⁸ Plan to Combat Homelessness in Barcelona 2016-2020, <http://bit.ly/2GuGneF>

⁹ Proposal for a Comprehensive Plan for Homeless People in Zaragoza (2018), <http://bit.ly/2vj10IK>

¹⁰ Strategic Plan for the Comprehensive Care of Homeless Persons in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria 2017-2021, <http://bit.ly/2Gy2Nfi>

¹¹ The Homelessness Plan of Galicia is also currently being drawn up.

in Barcelona, 15% in the Basque Country); meanwhile, the proportion of homeless people accommodated in centres has increased (by 11% in Madrid, 29% in Zaragoza, 33% in Barcelona, 15% in the Basque Country).¹²

This increase in the number of homeless people accommodated in centres is related to the increase in the number of centres for homeless people in the state as a whole. In the latest survey carried out by the INE in 2016 on the centres and services for homeless people,¹³ it was observed that the number of places in centres for the homeless grew by 14.62% between 2014 and 2016 (from 16,684 to 19,124). The daily average of people who stayed in homeless care centres grew by 20.46% between 2014 and 2016 (from 13,645 to 16,437). Average occupancy reached 85.9%, as against 81.8% in 2014. This INE survey included the Housing First programme for the first time: in June 2016, 132 dwellings were allocated (occupied by 233 persons); in December 2016, 171 dwellings had been allocated (occupied by 271 persons).

Turning to insecure and inadequate housing, according to the FOESSA Foundation survey (2018b), in 2018 almost 800,000 households suffered from housing insecurity (four in 100 households); 1,300,000 households suffered from housing inadequacy (seven in 100 households); and 150,000 households suffered from both at the same time (see Table A2 in the Annex).

As for the **evolution** of homelessness, although the sources used are not entirely comparable, the data on homelessness indicated above (INE surveys: 21,900 homeless persons in 2005 and 22,938 in 2012; the ENI-PSH 2015-2020 estimate for 2014: 33,000; the Caritas estimate: 40,000 at present; together with the evolution since 2014 of the above-mentioned counts of homeless persons) all point to an increase over the past decade in the number of homeless persons who have no house and no roof over their heads. Several regional strategies to combat homelessness (see Section 2) agree that the increase in homelessness is due to economic deprivation associated with the crisis, and to relational or psychosocial deprivation. According to the INE, in 2012 some 45% of those surveyed had become homeless because they had lost their job; the second most common reason was their inability to pay more for their accommodation (26%); and the third cause was separation from their spouse or partner (20.9%).

According to the FOESSA Foundation survey (2018a), 61% of the non-EU population suffered from housing exclusion in 2018. According to this report, 23.7% of the population was affected by housing exclusion – a figure similar to that recorded in the period prior to the crisis. It also affected 60% of those living in situations of exclusion and 69% of the population in severe exclusion.

According to the Fourth Overview of Housing Exclusion in Europe by FEANTSA and the Abbé Pierre Foundation (2019), in 2017 the proportion of households overburdened by housing costs was 36.5% of the population in poverty and 9.8% of the total population. The share of households with rent or mortgage arrears was the seventh highest in Europe: 10.5% among poor households and 3.8% among the total population (well above the EU average). Some 19.4% of poor households experienced financial difficulty

¹² In the city of Madrid, the number of homeless people increased by 25% between 2016 and 2018 – from 2,059 to 2,583 (1,933 people in centres and flats and 650 on the streets) (IX Homeless Count in Madrid 2018, <https://faciam.org/tag/recuentos/>). In Zaragoza, 470 homeless people were detected in 2016 (347 people in centres and 123 people living on the street), up from 455 in 2012 (Proposal for a Comprehensive Plan for homeless people in Zaragoza, 2018). In Barcelona, there were 2,980 homeless people in 2017 (1,954 accommodated in centres and 1,026 people sleeping on the street), up from 2,933 in 2013 (Sales, 2013; <http://bit.ly/2W1lu1b>). In the Basque Country, in the period 2014-2016, the number of homeless people increased from 1,836 to 2,009 (1,735 in centres and 274 on the street) (Basque Strategy for Homeless People, 2018-2021). In Galicia, there were 340 homeless people in 2017 (211 in centres and 129 on the street; <http://bit.ly/2Uv10wp>); in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 361 homeless persons were detected in 2016 (280 persons in centres and 81 on the street; <http://bit.ly/2Gy2Nfj>); in Alicante, 195 persons were sleeping on the street in 2017 (<http://bit.ly/2L0o3zN>); in Mallorca, 209 persons were sleeping on the street in 2017 (<http://bit.ly/2KXSCpJ>).

¹³ Press release, INE, <http://bit.ly/2LTdz5M>

in maintaining an adequate temperature in their homes (up 49% since 2010), compared with 8% of the total population (up 35% since 2010).

Finally, with regard to the **profile** of the homeless population in Spain, according to the 2012 Survey of Homeless Persons, the homeless in Spain tend to be male (80.3%), aged 42.7 years on average, with a medium-low educational level and no work activity. Approximately half of homeless people have a partner and children. Between 2005 and 2012, the proportion of those aged over 45 increased among homeless persons as a whole, rising from 29% to 42.5%. Women accounted for 25% of young homeless people (18-29 years old).

With regard to nationality, 54.2% were Spaniards and 45.8% foreign nationals (35% of the total number of homeless persons were non-European). The main increase between 2005 and 2012 (27%) occurred among Africans. Homelessness among foreigners is becoming more and more persistent.

The duration of homelessness increased between 2005 and 2012. The proportion of people who had been homeless for between 6 and 12 months rose from 8.8% to 12%; the proportion who had been homeless for between one and three years increased from 20.7% to 23.6%; and the figure for those who had been homeless for over three years rose from 37.5% to 44.5%.

Regarding the health of homeless persons, 58.6% stated that they were in good or very good health, while 14.2% perceived their health to be bad or very bad. Of those surveyed, 30.7% stated that they had some chronic illness; 16.6% of people with some chronic illness had a mental disorder; 15.2% had a recognised disability; 0.2% of homeless women consumed alcohol to excess; 9.4% of homeless older persons suffered from alcoholism; 37.3% of homeless youth and homeless persons aged 30-44 used drugs (among homeless persons aged 45-64, this figure was 40%).

2 Relevant strategies and policies to tackle homelessness and housing exclusion

Institutional framework for analysis. Analysis of the strategies and policies aimed at combating homelessness and housing exclusion must be carried out within the context of the economic and financial crisis and its social impact on Spain during the period 2012-2018. During this period, there was a significant impact on access to housing and ever more cases of housing exclusion. These problems were addressed by both general and specific public policies for the homeless.

The impact of the economic and financial crisis mobilised civil society in the fight against housing exclusion. NGOs that were traditionally very active in the fight against housing exclusion,¹⁴ as well as others created in the years of the greatest impact of the crisis,¹⁵ supported public programmes to limit the risk of housing exclusion. As a consequence, the Central Administration approved a set of policies and programmes that responded to the extent and severity of the risk of housing exclusion.

Of these policies, four are worth highlighting. The first is the Social Housing Fund, set up in 2013 to help the most vulnerable groups who had lost their homes through eviction. Evicted property owners can remain in the housing they have lost if they pay rent. This also applies to those who transfer the property in lieu of payment.¹⁶ Both these cases apply to households with minors, dependent or disabled persons, pensioners and vulnerable households. The second policy regards Law 1/2013 on measures to strengthen

¹⁴ RAIS (<http://raisfundacion.org>), Spanish Caritas and FACIAM (Federation of Support Entities for the Homeless, <http://faciam.org>), among others.

¹⁵ Platform of People Affected by Mortgages (PAH) on evictions.

¹⁶ Return of the dwelling to the bank, with no additional interest costs or financial burdens.

the protection of mortgage payers, debt restructuring and social rental; this was the result of a Citizens' Legislative Initiative, and suspended evictions for a period of two years (subsequently extended to four years in 2015),¹⁷ without altering the mortgage foreclosure proceedings. The third measure of interest was Royal Decree-law 5/2017, which modified Law 1/2013 to extend the moratorium period for evictions following mortgage foreclosure until March 2020, improve access to housing rental during the foreclosure proceedings and extend the economic conditions of protection, debt restructuring and social rental for vulnerable groups. Finally, the fourth policy concerns Royal Decree 897/2017 regulating the population of vulnerable consumers¹⁸, the social discount rate and other protective measures for domestic consumers of electricity, in order to alleviate material deprivation and the costs associated with housing (Arriba and Rodríguez Cabrero, 2018).

All these measures aimed at alleviating aspects of social exclusion that demanded an urgent response – especially those related to the loss of housing. However, taking into account the extent and social impact of the problem, the recommendations of the European Parliament and the persistent demands of TSSA, the government promoted the development of two strategies: one a general strategy for access to housing, and the other aimed specifically at combating homelessness (described below).

The national strategy for access to housing. The general strategy for access to housing in Spain is set out in the National Housing Plan 2018-2021, which updates the Housing Plan 2013-2016,¹⁹ the evaluation of which has not yet taken place. The new plan includes schemes to support rental housing, as well as urban rehabilitation and renovation. The plan seeks to facilitate access to housing for the most vulnerable groups, and to reactivate employment in the construction sector. In other words, as a general plan to support access to housing, it highlights the objective of public policies to combat housing exclusion. Certainly, these objectives were already contemplated in the Housing Plan 2013-2016, but they had not been put into practice.

What actions does the Housing Plan 2018-2021 envisage? The new National Housing Plan has been approved for the period 2018-2021. This initiative entails a continuation of the Housing Plan for 2013-2016 (and extended to 2017). The new plan has launched a number of programmes, including: i) rental assistance, ii) assistance for households experiencing forced eviction from their habitual residence, and iii) youth assistance, consisting of economic benefits and lump sums according to different housing needs. As regards rental assistance, subsidies of up to 40% of the monthly rent are envisaged for low-income households, with maximum amounts of between €600 and €900 per month over a period of three years. Assistance to low-income households experiencing forced eviction is based on access to the state-owned housing fund of the SAREB,²⁰ with subsidies of up to €400 per month for a period of two years. The assistance programme for young persons under the age of 35 is a new initiative, whereby financing is provided **either** for 50% of the rent (with maximum monthly amounts of between €600 and €900) for a period of three years **or** for the purchase of housing, with subsidies not exceeding 20% of the purchase price.

¹⁷ Royal Decree 1/2015, currently 25/2015 on the second-chance mechanism, reducing financial burdens and other social measures.

¹⁸ "Vulnerable consumer" is defined as a consumer of electricity in his/her permanent residence whose individual or family annual income is below €11,279.38.

¹⁹ The State Plan for the Promotion of Rental Housing, Building Rehabilitation, and Urban Renewal and Regeneration 2013-2016.

²⁰ Sociedad de Gestión de Activos procedentes de la Reestructuración Bancaria – Asset Management Company for Assets Arising from Bank Restructuring.

The ENI-PSH,²¹ as part of the NAP/inclusion 2013-2016, is considered a central element of the social services system,²² and was developed as a parliamentary initiative in which the TSSA played an important role. It was approved in May 2014.²³

The development of this strategy has been virtually paralysed until now, due to a lack of institutional and financial commitment. On 21 September 2017, the Spanish parliament approved a new 'non-legislative proposal' to promote the development of the strategy approved in 2015. The proposal consisted in approving a Comprehensive Action Plan for the Homeless, in collaboration with the Autonomous Communities, local governments and the TSSA. This proposal has not yet been put into practice, and so it has been postponed to the next policy cycle (2019-2023). Having provided this clarification, we now describe the features of the ENI-PSH approved in 2015, as well as its roll-out in some Autonomous Communities.

What is the **orientation** of the ENI-PSH 2015-2020? The approach of the strategy is based on the 'priority application of Housing Led approaches' (Llobet and Aguilar, 2016). This strategy is based on three principles: Housing First – as opposed to the traditional policy that prioritised municipal shelters (*albergues* in Spanish); comprehensive care targeting the homeless persons themselves, including employment, education and healthcare; and finally, the principle of offering a diversity of support services, the provision of which depends on the Autonomous Communities and local governments.

These principles are spelt out in five main objectives: i) preventing homelessness; ii) raising the awareness of society and defending homeless people against discrimination; iii) guaranteeing the security of homeless people; iv) restoring life projects; and v) strengthening the public system of care for homeless people, as well as improving knowledge, exchange of information and street counts. The gender perspective is central, given that the number of homeless women is increasing.

The ENI-PSH is an institutional framework that promotes joint action by the Central Administration, the Autonomous Communities and the TSSA. However, the regional and local governments assume institutional and administrative responsibility for development of the strategy. In the specific case of the fight against homelessness, the Central Administration collects the 0.7% tax contributions from individuals²⁴ and then passes 80% of that money to the Autonomous Communities for the funding of this measure.

Operational categories 1-4 of ETHOS Light (i.e. persons who are roofless and homeless) are used for the concrete development of the fight against homelessness. As we pointed out in Section 1, the strategy does not consider the other two categories of ETHOS light

²¹ The homeless are defined according to FEANTSA ETHOS (European Typology on Homelessness and Housing Exclusion), proposed by FEANTSA, <http://goo.gl/71XMhC>

²² This group is included within the Social Services Reference Catalogue, approved by resolution of the Territorial Social Services Council, and the System for Autonomy and Care for Dependency, <http://bit.ly/2jZthyQ>.

²³ It calls for the implementation – within the framework of the NAP/inclusion 2013-2016 and in collaboration with the Autonomous Communities, local administrations and the TSSA, including the Federation of Support NGO for Homeless People – of a Comprehensive National Strategy for homeless people that integrates the perspectives of social policy and housing, as well as health, work or education, and that complies with the Resolutions of the European Parliament.

²⁴ In this personal income tax programme, taxpayers may decide to earmark 0.7% of their annual personal income tax (PIT) declaration to fund activities of social interest. Assistance to homeless people is only one of these activities (others include development cooperation, environmental protection, etc.). Moreover, this possibility is only offered to those who complete an annual PIT declaration and whose PIT is positive (in Spain, around three out of every four declarations have a negative result). As a consequence, the amount of public funds that reach NGOs working with homeless people through this channel is quite limited. That said, the social projects funded through these funds are aimed at innovative social activities in the field of the fight against exclusion. In 2018 the two-source funding system to support NGOs was as follows: EUR 49,282,767 came from the 0.7% central state income tax programme and EUR 202,688,592 from also the 0.7% Autonomous Communities income tax programme (excluding the Basque Country), a total amount of EUR 251,971,359 invested in social exclusion programmes. It is unknown what percentage of this total public expenditure has been invested in homeless programmes.

(categories 5 and 6: insecure and inadequate housing). The strategy expresses it clearly: 'This Strategy aims to provide effective concrete solutions so that people in situations A and B who are living on the street or in alternative accommodation due to lack of housing can overcome these conditions of social exclusion and extreme poverty, and to establish lines of preventive action for the rest of the population at social risk.'

The 2016 INE survey on centres and services for homeless people (see Section 1) allows us to confirm three things: although care centres (*albergues*) continue to play an important role as support services for homeless people, there is a growing preference among stakeholders for flats or alternative forms of accommodation; almost half of the estimated homeless population is accommodated outside the care and protection services; and the system of social support and inclusion continues to be mostly private, although with predominantly public funding (NGOs play a central role in the detection, reception and comprehensive assistance of homeless people).

The **funding** of the ENI-PSH is covered in a very generic way in the programme document. Under the general heading 'Evaluation and Financing of the Strategy', it is stated that funding of the strategy falls on the Central Administration, the Autonomous Communities and local governments, in line with the current system of decentralisation of social policies. The actual hard details of the funding and its distribution will be specified on the basis of future comprehensive care plans for homeless persons. As the first national comprehensive care plan has not yet been developed, the size of the planned investment and its distribution is unknown. It is stated that 'when comprehensive care plans are designed in each territory, it will be possible to conceive the scale of investment needed in each of the Autonomous Communities and local administrations'. As a result, four years after approval of the ENI-PSH, public spending on policies to combat homelessness still does not follow any strategic logic, but rather the traditional spending path of the different administrations involved – principally local governments.

Part of the expenditure goes on local homeless shelters. This was estimated at €201.1 million in 2012 and €220.7 million in 2014, taking into account both public and private centres (the latter receive 60% of their funding from the public administrations). However, this is only part of the expenditure. It does not consider the costs of prevention, social intervention and community actions of different kinds developed by the municipal social services.

The Central Administration contributes directly through two programmes: the earmarking of 0.7% of personal income tax (see above and footnote 24) and the Concerted Plan of basic benefits of the municipal social services; however, its contribution to the financing of the fight against housing exclusion is nominal. The Autonomous Communities play quite an important role in the planning and financing of programmes to combat exclusion. However, it is local governments – especially of large cities and municipalities with more than 20,000 inhabitants – that play the biggest role in implementing the programmes and that assume the greatest share of social expenditure.

The ENI-PSH 2015-2020 has had some impact, by constituting a reference framework for the approval of regional strategies to combat homelessness. Among the strategies approved have been those of the Madrid region²⁵ and the Basque Country,²⁶ as well as those of some larger cities such as Barcelona,²⁷ Madrid²⁸ and Zaragoza.²⁹ It is also worth

²⁵ Plan for the Inclusion of Homeless People in the Community of Madrid 2016-2021.

²⁶ Basque Strategy for Homeless People 2018-2021. This strategy includes a synthesis of the main European models for the fight against homelessness in its plan.

²⁷ Plan to Combat Homelessness 2016-2020.

²⁸ Municipal Strategy for Homelessness Protection and Care 2015-2020.

²⁹ Comprehensive Plan for Homeless People in Zaragoza (2017).

highlighting new strategies currently in the process of design and approval, such as Galicia's.³⁰

These municipal strategies and plans have one common denominator: they are oriented towards the housing-led approach, and a gender perspective is central to them. The review of the strategies and action plans that we have carried out is lacking in two central respects. First, there is no information on monitoring and evaluation indicators, or on the financial investment foreseen for implementation of the new Housing First model. In any case, the new municipal plans and regional strategies share the progressive abandonment of a welfare approach, in favour of comprehensive intervention to support people in situations of housing exclusion (FACIAM, 2012; Duque, 2014). Secondly, there are no data on the diversification of support services, so that the municipal shelter or boarding house ceases to be the social resource par excellence (SIIS, 2017).

From the analysis carried out, there is no evidence of the use of **European Funds** to finance policies and programmes to combat housing exclusion.

How are the ENI-PSH and the other regional and municipal strategies, **implemented and monitored**? The national strategy includes a set of indicators to be developed by the different levels of government and the TSSA. Many of them follow the path of FEANTSA's experience. However, in the absence of an action plan, it is not possible to report on the final implementation of the system of indicators. On the other hand, regional and municipal strategies report in some detail on their objectives regarding groups at risk of exclusion, but do not provide information on final indicators or on financing.

With regard to the use and monitoring of **European indicators** on housing exclusion, these are not mentioned in the regional strategies and municipal programmes, as those documents focus on homelessness. The Housing First approach will make the use of such indicators necessary.

3 Analysis of the current patterns of service provision and challenges in implementing Spain's responses to homelessness and housing exclusion

In this section, we analyse the types of services, the main providers, the existence of prevention programmes, the effectiveness of the most outstanding services and innovations, the limitations of the policies and, finally, the shortcomings and challenges faced by policies to combat homelessness.

3.1 Types of support services

According to the latest survey carried out by the INE, in 2016, on the centres and services for homeless people,³¹ 36.9% of the centres declared that their main activity was to provide accommodation in rooms or apartments; 24.8% considered themselves a reception centre; 9.5% a day centre/occupational workshop; 9.3% indicated that they constituted a shelter/night centre; 8.6% a social canteen; 4.2% a social residence; and the remaining 6.5% declared some other type of activity.

The most frequent benefits offered by the centres were information and reception (83.3%), accommodation (75.7%), guidance and/or referral (74.9%), care and social accompaniment (73.4%), personal hygiene (65.6%) and catering (65.2%).

These types of services vary between Autonomous Communities and municipalities.

³⁰ Forecast on the implementation of the Action Plan for Homeless People in Galicia 2019-2023.

³¹ Press release, INE, <http://bit.ly/2UDgK0s>

Prevention services are practically non-existent. It can be stated that the supply of services is in a situation of transition. On the one hand, the shelter service is in crisis or is only used in an emergency; it is an immediate and low-intensity action resource, but it does not constitute a resource with a medium-term impact on the eradication of homelessness. On the other hand, the offer of housing access services (housing-led) under the Housing First methodology is making headway in various Autonomous Communities (including Asturias, Madrid, Catalonia, the Basque Country and Andalusia) as a means of social inclusion through housing, accompanied by support in accessing employment. The large city councils have street outreach services that are usually managed by NGOs or municipal social emergency services.

3.2 The main service providers: local authorities, NGOs and religious organisations

At a more general level, the Central Administration or government defines the main lines of the national strategy and contributes to the financing of some specific programmes. The planning of programmes to combat homelessness takes place at two levels, which are not always complementary: regional and local. Regional plans and strategies set out the main lines of action and contribute to financing part of the programmes against homelessness or to accessing housing in general, through regional housing plans. For their part, local authorities design the planning of policies, finance a significant part of the programmes, and manage the benefits in collaboration with the private non-profit sector.

In Spain, there are two main providers of services for the homeless at the local level: municipal governments and NGOs. In 2016, 26.8% of centres were publicly owned, and the rest were privately owned by NGOs and religious organisations. The latter have an extensive network of shelters. We are thus dealing with a mixed system, in which the provision is mainly private, but with partial public funding.

In fact, in 2016 some 76.8% of the centres were financed solely or mainly by public administrations (in 2014, this percentage was 79.2%); 11.6% were financed mostly from their own funds; 5.1% using funds from private non-profit institutions; 4.9% from private donations; and 0.6% by companies. The remaining 1.0% did not have a predominant source of financing (2016 Survey on centres and services for the care of homeless persons).

The large municipalities of Spain (Madrid, Barcelona, Zaragoza, Bilbao, Oviedo, among others) have, in collaboration with NGOs, developed a public offer of community services that combine the centres or shelters with an offer of housing or flats.

3.3 Effectiveness of services in preventing HHE

There are no homelessness prevention programmes as such that have a relevant local or regional dimension. From the consultation carried out with the main NGOs in Spain that specialise in homelessness,³² it is clear that either no results on prevention have been collated for the programmes that are running, or else they are not published by the municipalities or the NGOs. Most reports refer to ratios of care coverage; prevention is not regarded as part of the social and public intervention.³³

The pressure of demand entails giving an immediate response, and there is insufficient capacity to undertake preventive tasks. In other words, municipal services for the

³² Interview with José Manuel Caballol, director general of the RAIS Foundation, on 29 April 2019: <https://raisfundacion.org/>

³³ Municipal reports do not usually refer to the reality of evictions in Spain. Thus, in 2018, the total evictions were 56,230 (18,945 for non-payment of mortgage and 37,285 for non-payment of rent). Compared to 2014, the reduction has not been significant: in 2014, the total number of evictions was 68,091 (28,877 foreclosures and 36,044 for non-payment of rent).

homeless in Spain are organised to provide an immediate response to social demand, and are not geared to prevention.

3.4 Effectiveness of existing services in providing comprehensive and flexible support according to people's needs and in providing access to permanent accommodation solutions

There is no information available on the effectiveness of support services for homeless persons. No shelter publishes data on the effectiveness of its actions of social inclusion for its users.

As for the initiatives implemented under the Housing First approach, no final evidence has yet been published, as these are in the experimental phase.³⁴

In general, and according to the very limited information available, the intervention of the services is often fragmented according to the different benefits. There is no effective coordination between benefits and services. The solutions that can guarantee permanent accommodation only benefit a minority (barely 10%) of the homeless population.

3.5 Systemic causes that limit the effectiveness and sustainability of policies and programmes

Homeless people in Spain are a small group in terms of numbers, but a significant one as the utmost expression of social exclusion. For this reason, the issue should be highlighted, and not subsumed in the broader field of housing exclusion. It is necessary to draw a clear distinction between homelessness and housing exclusion. From this perspective, the new public strategies, encouraged by a growing NGO sector, are abandoning the so-called 'staircase model'³⁵ (or individual responsibility model), and replacing it with a Housing First model. As a consequence, the social intervention strategies are replacing care in residences and centres with the right of access to housing, although there is still a certain resistance to change on the part of the managers of centres and shelters. The predominant approach is to provide homeless people with housing in the community.

Among the systemic causes that limit the effectiveness and sustainability of homelessness policies and programmes, the following should be highlighted:

- a) The lack of sufficient, adequate and accessible housing for the homeless. Thus, at the national level, it is estimated that around 77% of homeless people claim to need a flat to live in, and yet the current supply of individual or shared flats at the national level would reach only 10% of current potential demand.³⁶
- b) The lack of a personalised or supported job offer for the homeless, many of whom have been out of the labour market for long periods of time. In the context of high structural unemployment, the mainstream labour market cannot absorb the labour supply of this group. Social enterprises need to provide employment, as a transition into the labour market. These and similar resources – such as special employment centres for people with disabilities or social cooperatives – are the safest and most effective alternatives to facilitate transition into the mainstream labour market.

In this context, the alternative of training homeless people before integrating them into the labour market often delays their entry. Experience seems to indicate that, as a general principle, the aim should be to offer an individual (or a group) housing and employment – if possible, at the same time. Once the individual is integrated into a social

³⁴ There is a pilot programme of the RAIS Foundation with 38 homes for homeless people and for health improvement, but the results have not yet been published.

³⁵ The 'staircase model' is defined as a progressive social inclusion process that culminates in access to housing.

³⁶ RAIS Foundation, <https://raisfundacion.org/>

or cooperative enterprise, action can be taken in the area of training and the reinforcement of work skills.

3.6 Innovations in relation to homelessness

There have been two types of innovations over the past five years that are worth highlighting:

- a) The first refers to the approach: the welfare logic (based on the offer of shelters or residences) has been displaced by the housing-led logic, whose development is based on the Housing First methodology.
- b) The second is the joint development of housing and health access programmes between specialised NGOs. An example of this innovation is the alliance between the main association offering housing or flats for homeless people in Spain – the Provivienda Association³⁷ – and the RAIS Foundation, an NGO that has been very active in the fight against housing exclusion. In the same vein, it is worth highlighting the experiences of innovation in the field of healthcare developed jointly by NGOs from the health sector³⁸ and social services.

3.7 Weaknesses and priorities for the improvement of policies and programmes

The evolution of homelessness over the past five years, especially since the approval of the ENI-PSH, allows us to identify some weaknesses in policies and programmes in this field, as well as to highlight some fundamental priorities for the development of comprehensive policies.

a) Weaknesses:

- The absence of a common methodology for diagnosing homelessness. A triple count – over three consecutive nights – or some other exhaustive methodology is necessary to achieve reliable situation maps.
- It is worth asking whether the ENI-PSH 2015-2020, which has not yet been implemented (partly due to the political context of uncertainty and changes in government between 2016 and 2018), should be regarded as concluded, and whether a new strategy should be initiated with the new political cycle. In any case, without a national action plan and a commitment to social investment, the current strategy is utterly sterile.
- The regional housing departments and, in general, the National Housing Plan, are alien to homelessness. They focus on financing access to housing and rental contracts, but do not take into account the reality of people living on the street. Where there is commitment by a housing department to programmes to combat homelessness (as in the case of the Autonomous Community of Asturias), the success of public action is guaranteed.
- The failure of mainstream employment programmes to incorporate homeless people. Without commitment from the social economy, it is not possible to guarantee labour integration, much less transition to the labour market.
- The absence of health departments from the construction of social and healthcare for a group with chronic disease or very bad health. The social services departments alone cannot solve this problem.

³⁷ Provivienda Association: <https://www.provivienda.org/>

³⁸ María Asunción Almajano Salvo Foundation: <https://asun4.org/>

- Growing *aporophobia*³⁹ or hate crimes against the poor living on the streets. This is not adequately covered by the Criminal Code and has not yet shown up clearly on the radar of public opinion.

b) Priorities

- A commitment to social investment at the state level by the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Health and Social Services is necessary. The provisions of the state budget for 2019 (not yet approved) should be put on the table again to render the public agenda against homelessness effective.
- For the current year 2019, it is necessary to approve a national action plan with the support of all institutional and social actors and with corresponding financial support. Since 2015, none of the plans envisaged by the ENI-PSH 2015-2020 has been realised.
- We do not have exact information on the size and characteristics of the homeless population, and must thus rely on estimates. The involvement of NGOs in the design of public statistics is a positive step, as is the application of methodologies based on a 'triple count' (see above) of people living on the streets. It is necessary to update the data from the Survey of Homeless People carried out by the INE (the latest data are from 2012), and to include a survey of people who do not attend centres for homeless people.
- The Housing First approach needs to be strengthened. This requires social actors to grow and cooperate more effectively. In the fight against homelessness, there are currently a few big NGOs (Caritas and the Red Cross), a very few medium-sized NGOs and too many small NGOs. This social sector needs to improve its synergies and cooperation, in order to move towards a housing rights policy.
- The current institutional coordination is deficient. There is no effective coordination between the Central Administration, the Autonomous Communities and the municipalities, and nor is there coordination between the departments of housing, social services and healthcare. The European experience is being incorporated progressively but slowly. In fact, for example, European funds are not used for homelessness programmes.

In view of the above analysis, it is necessary to deepen policies for the inclusion of homeless people: policies that help counter public indifference and stigmatisation of the homeless; policies that protect homeless women against violence and abuse; policies that increase national and regional budgets dedicated to social housing; policies that improve the prevention of homelessness, by avoiding evictions and intervening in the early stages of family breakdown; and policies to ensure accommodation for young people leaving institutions. The extension of minimum income coverage to homeless people should also be considered.

³⁹ *Aporophobia* is a neologism proposed at the end of the 1990s by Professor of Ethics Adela Cortina (University of Valencia) to distinguish between fear and hatred of foreigners (*xenophobia*) and hatred or fear of the poor.

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Annex

Table A1: ETHOS Light categories defined as homeless in Spain

Operational category		Living situation		Definition	Defined as homeless in Spain
1	People living rough	1	Public space/ external space	Living in the streets or public spaces without a shelter that can be defined as living quarters	YES
2	People in emergency accommodation	2	Overnight shelters	People with no place of usual residence who move frequently between various types of accommodation	YES
3	People living in accommodation for the homeless	3	Homeless hostels	Where the period of stay is time limited and no long-term housing is provided	YES
		4	Temporary accommodation		YES
		5	Transitional supported accommodation		YES
		6	Women's shelter or refuge accommodation		YES
4	People living in institutions	7	Healthcare institutions	Stay longer than needed due to lack of housing	YES
		8	Penal institutions	No housing available prior to release	YES
5	People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing	9	Mobile homes	Where the accommodation is used due to a lack of housing and is not the person's usual place of residence	YES. These categories are not included in the definition used in the ENI-PSH but situations of insecure and inadequate housing are considered in broader policies related to combating social exclusion and housing exclusion
		10	Non-conventional building		
		11	Temporary structures		
6	Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing)	12	Conventional housing, but not the person's usual place of residence	Where the accommodation is used due to a lack of housing and is not the person's usual place of residence	YES. These categories are not included in the definition used in the ENI-PSH but situations of insecure and inadequate housing are considered in broader policies related to combating social exclusion and housing exclusion

Table A2: Latest available data on the number of homeless in Spain

Operational category		Living situation		Most recent number	Period covered	Source
1	People living rough	1	Public space/ external space	3,419 2,943 (halls of public buildings, corridors, staircases, abandoned cars, etc.)	2012	2012 Homeless Persons Survey (National Statistics Institute – INE), http://bit.ly/2W1IWMV
2	People in emergency accommodation	2	Overnight shelters			
3	People living in accommodation for the homeless	3	Homeless hostels	9,915	2012	2012 Homeless Persons Survey (National Statistics Institute-INE), http://bit.ly/2W1IWMV
		4	Temporary accommodation	3,537 (in housing provided by an NGO or public agency)	2012	
		5	Transitional supported accommodation	1,239 (in a boarding house paid for by an NGO or agency)	2012	
		6	Women’s shelter or refuge accommodation	103	2012	
4	People living in institutions	7	Healthcare institutions			
		8	Penal institutions			
5	People living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing	9	Mobile homes	For living conditions 5.9, 5.10 and 5.11 altogether: 1,300,000 households (inadequate housing, including overcrowding)	2018	FOESSA Foundation (2018b)
		10	Non-conventional building			
		11	Temporary structures			
6	Homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing)	12	Conventional housing, but not the person’s usual place of residence	1,738 (occupied housing)	2012	2012 Homeless Persons Survey (National Statistics Institute-INE), http://bit.ly/2W1IWMV FOESSA Foundation (2018b)
				800,000 households (insecure)	2018	

