



Frontline agencies in partnership

Migrants in the Survey of Needs and Provision

Survey of Needs and Provision

The Survey of Needs and Provision (SNAP), conducted by Homeless Link and Resource Information Service (RIS), and funded by the CLG and CRASH¹, brings together and makes publicly available data on single homeless people and couples in England.

The research focused on day centres and accommodation based services for single homeless people and couples, including both direct access/emergency hostels² and second stage supported accommodation³. The research consisted of three main elements:

- Analysis of data about hostels and supported accommodation from the Supporting People (SP) provider database⁴ and basic analysis of SP client records.
- Analysis of data about day centres, direct access hostels and second stage supported accommodation from Homeless UK.
- A telephone survey of a sample of 151 day centres, hostels and second stage supported accommodation providers on Homeless UK, to gather more detailed information about clients served and their needs, services provided, standards of buildings and sources of funding.

This briefing summarises the telephone survey findings in SNAP relating to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

¹ CRASH is the property and construction industry charity for the homeless. www.crash.org.uk

² Direct access hostels are short stay emergency services aimed at rough sleepers or those in need of immediate accommodation that usually have 24 hour staffing, frequent vacancies, no or limited waiting lists and can often accept self referrals.

³ Second stage supported accommodation projects provide longer-term accommodation for homeless people, often to those moving on from "first stage" direct access hostels. These projects usually have waiting lists, less frequent vacancies than direct access hostels, and are less likely to accept self-referrals.

⁴ Supporting People data covers England.

Summary of findings

A range of migrants access homelessness services and they are especially prevalent in day centre services. Day centre services are often more open access than accommodation providers, as almost all of the 187 day centres in England offer drop-in services. Their reliance on charitable funding and volunteers can make their service provision less secure, but also allows for more flexibility as to whom they support. For those migrants with no recourse to public funds, day centre services may therefore be among the few services that they have access to.

Refugees and asylum seekers

Half of all projects (day centres and accommodation services) report no refugee clients. However, refugees are more common in day centres and less common in second stage supported accommodation.

In our analysis of Supporting People (SP) services, we focussed on services primarily for rough sleepers, single homeless and young people at risk. However, 'Refugees' is separate client group in SP services. A small percentage (1.5%) of the household units we analysed had refugees as a secondary client group. However, 40% of the 1,316 SP units with Refugees as the primary client group have Single homeless people with support needs or Young people at risk as a secondary client group. This could mean that a large proportion of the housing related support aimed at homeless refugees is actually classified as refugee services, rather than homelessness projects.

Asylum seekers

Only 30% of day centres have no asylum seekers, whereas the same was true for 60% direct access hostels and 80% of second stage supported accommodation. Where they are present, asylum seekers generally represent between 1-25% of clients.

This should be interpreted within the context of alternative accommodation provision for asylum seekers. People seeking asylum who would be homeless and destitute are housed by the Border and Immigration Agency (BIA), firstly through initial accommodation and in dispersal accommodation once applicants have been inducted to the asylum application process.⁵

It should be noted that the survey did not ask about the prevalence of individuals with no recourse to public funds such, e.g. failed asylum seekers, in services, although some respondents may have included this group in the asylum seeker category.

Eastern European migrants

⁵ <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/asylum/support/accommodation/>

Over 70% of day centres saw at least some Eastern European migrants. This mirrors Homeless Link's 2006 London research, which found that over three quarters of day centres, night shelters and outreach teams saw A8 nationals (people from eight countries that acceded to the European Union in 2004).⁶ The prevalence of this group in homelessness services is a relatively recent phenomenon, since accession in 2004. Homeless Link's research identified a range of barriers to working with this client group. Given that our sample is drawn from across England this is indicative of an emergent issue outside of London too.⁷

Specialist services

Based on the sample we surveyed, specialist support services appear to be more commonplace in accommodation based projects. None of the 40 day centres in the telephone survey reported that they had specialist services or support workers for refugees, asylum seekers or Eastern European Migrants. However, out of the 111 accommodation projects in the survey:

- Seven (6%) had services or support workers for refugees
- Seven (6%) had services or support workers for asylum seekers
- Four (4%) had services or support workers for Eastern Europeans

⁶ Homeless Link (2006) **A8 nationals in London homelessness services**, Homeless Link: London

⁷ There was no statistically significant difference between services outside of London and London based services in terms of whether they had Eastern European clients in their services.